THE COMMUNIST

Vol. XIII JULY, 1934 No. 7

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The Darrow Report

THE report of the majority of the Darrow Board has revealed by very glaring examples the growing power of monopolies and trusts under the N.R.A. The facts revealed in the Darrow report but confirm the correctness of the Communist analysis of the N.R.A. "Under the mask of the 'radical' slogan of 'controlled production'", said Comrade Browder at the Extraordinary Party Conference on July 7, 1933, "the Industrial Recovery Act has merely speeded up and centralized the process of trustification which has long been the dominant feature of American economy. There is now being carried out a cleanup of all these 'little fellows'".

What has at this time forced these "little fellows" to raise their voices in protest against the monopolies and trusts? What has given them the courage to complain? First, the mounting wave of strike struggles and the mass resistance of the industrial proletariat to the N.R.A. Secondly, as pointed out by Comrade Browder at the Extraordinary Party Conference, "the intensification of all social and economic contradictions" resulting from the very "economic planning" and "controlled production" schemes of the N.R.A. The small-capitalist interests in the United States are, therefore, now trying to capitalize the resistance of the toiling masses to the N.R.A., to force concessions from the trusts and monopolies. Only when this is understood will it be possible to prevent the small bourgeoisie, supported by various non-proletarian sections of the population, from crystallizing political movements to divert the independent class struggles of the workers and farmers against the N.R.A., into channels of peace and conciliation with monopoly capitalism. This can especially be done when the "trust busters" of the Darrow type influence certain sections of the working class. Because of this, their demagogy is particularly dangerous.

What proposals does the Darrow report make to the "little fellows" to combat the "monopolistic practices" of the N.R.A. codes?

To some codes, as in the steel industry, the report proposes cer-

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tain amendments. It calls upon the steel trust to surrender the "preposterous device" of maintaining artificially high prices of finished products and return to the "methods of sanity". In industries like the motion picture, it proposes the changing of the present code administrator. One of the reasons given for this proposed change is that the present administrator "was associated with an attorney many of whose clients were and are now engaged in the theatrical and motion picture industry". In other industries, like the electrical and soft coal, it proposes that the present divisional code authority be abolished.

We must now ask whether this will abolish the "monopolist practices" of the N.R.A. codes? Supposing that the administrators of the codes will be changed, what difference will it make to the small producers, the workers in the industry, and the worker and farmer consumers? Who will appoint the so-called "impartial" and "anti-monopoly" code administrator? If the capitalist owners of industry appoint him, they will surely select a man or a group of men who will protect the interests of the big trusts, regardless of whether this administrator be a professor or preacher with no direct interests and investments in the given industry. If the government should appoint him, whom will an imperialist government appoint that will not defend the interests of the trusts? Will such changes make it easier for the small producers, will they be an aid to the struggles of the workers for higher wages, will they permit the workers to organize and strike? Would they not send police and troops to shoot down workers on picket lines? The proposals of the Darrow report will therefore make little change in the "monopolistic practices" of the N.R.A. codes.

It is the purpose of Darrow's National Recovery Review Board to "improve" the N.R.A. Darrow himself says that his report is trying to do "the identical thing that N.R.A. seeks to eliminate and that the suggestions made in our report are all to the good for that planned control", according to the *New York Times* of May 22. In fact, Darrow is pleading with the Roosevelt Administration to guard against being "understood as supporting monopolies". In general, the report rolls back the wheel of history when it attempts to bring back capitalism to its pre-monopolist stage. Historically the role of such Darrows is a reactionary one. The working class does not want a better capitalism, it wants to abolish it. Lenin taught the working class that imperialism has "created all the material premises for the Socialist organization of society" and that only the proletarian revolution will deliver humanity from its present impasse.

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It should be noted that the supplementary report of Darrow and Thompson is in marked contradiction to the official Darrow report. It does not call for "better" codes and a "better" N.R.A., as does the official report. It stated clearly, "The hope of the American people, including the small business man, not to be overwhelmed by their own abundance, lies in the planned use of America's resources following socialization." It admits that a planned economy in the United States is possible "only when industry produces for use and not for profit". The supplementary report is a serious indictment of the workings of capitalist economy. It is a glaring illustration of the helplessness of capitalism to overcome its own contradictions.

Indictments of capitalism are commonly heard today in many quarters of the bourgeoisie and from numerous capitalist reformers. They are insufficient and meaningless in themselves. The revolutionary working class not only indicts capitalism; it struggles for Soviet Power, for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, and the building of Socialism. The petty bourgeoisie is, of course, afraid to draw such conclusions. To the working class it must be clear that to have "socialized ownership and control", while capitalism and the capitalist State remain in existence, is impossible.

DEMOCRACY THE RULE OF MONOPOLY CAPITALISM

General Johnson was right in saying that the Darrow Board's report "means that the choice of the American people is between fascism and Communism" (*New York Times*, May 21, 1934). But what are the political implications of such conclusions? It does not mean that the "planned economy", which the Darrow report speaks of, is possible under fascism as it is under Communism. Fascism, as the unmasked, terrorist rule of the most imperialist elements of finance capital, sharpens the contradictions of capitalism and makes planned economy impossible. With his threat of Communism or fascism, Johnson wants to tell all oppositions to capitalist democracy, especially the petty bourgeoisie, that they have no choice, that their interests demand support of capitalist democracy, concretely the Roosevelt Administration. However, the Darrow report itself has shown that capitalist democracy is the rule of monopoly capitalism. Thus, when it becomes increasingly difficult for the monopolist bourgeoisie to maintain its rule by so-called democratic means, it resorts to fascism. The fascist tendencies now manifested by the American bourgeoisie are an attempt of monopolies to maintain their rule. The choice of the petty-bourgeois masses is,

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therefore, not between capitalist democracy and fascism, both of which are the rule of monopoly capitalism, with but different methods; the interests of the non-proletarian masses are identical with the struggles of the proletariat who will completely wipe out the rule of monopoly capitalism and establish a Socialist society free from the exploitation of man by man.

THE COMMUNIST ATTITUDE TO THE DARROW REPORT

The Communists must and can take advantage of the Darrow report. *Everything that sharpens the contradictions and differences within the capitalist class, between the big bourgeoisie and the "little fellows", we must welcome and make use of skillfully.* We must do everything in our power to expose before the toiling masses of the entire country the utter bankruptcy of the vacillating petty bourgeoisie and hence its inability to lead a consistent struggle against monopoly capitalism. It is also our task to show to the petty-bourgeois and non-proletarian masses of the city and country, that they have nothing to hope for under the rule of finance capital. These are the necessary prerequisites for a successful proletarian revolution in the United States. The Open Letter adopted by the Extraordinary Party Conference clearly outlined our policy on the question of winning the reserves of the proletarian revolution. The Letter says:

> "To ignore this means objectively to impede the proletariat in the winning of reserves and thus make it easier for the bourgeoisie to recruit fascist gangs from among the petty-bourgeois elements and to isolate the proletariat." (Page 16.)

Every revolutionary must understand that today the struggle for the so-called middle class, the farmers, is becoming sharper and sharper. The farmers can be won to our side "if only the Party will come out resolutely in defense of their interests" (Open Letter). However, the central points in our policy in respect to winning the reserves of the proletarian revolution are outlined in the Open Letter as follows:

> "If the Party intensifies its activity among the petty-bourgeois masses, without at the same time and above all strengthening its basis in the big factories and among the most important sections of the American working class . . . *then the danger arises* that the Party, having only weak contacts with the decisive section of American workers, will be driven away from its proletarian base, and instead of leading the petty-bourgeois masses will succumb to the influence of petty-bourgeois sentiments, illusions, and petty-bourgeois methods of work." (Page 16.)

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From this it also follows that in the immediate situation the Party must raise the fighting spirit of the workers and give political consciousness to their present economic struggles. We must show the workers how the A. F. of L. leaders rushed to the defense of the trusts and monopolies. The reactionary A. F. of L. bureaucracy on the N.R.A. Labor Advisory Board said that the Darrow report "has rendered a disservice to the nation and its citizens in a time of great economic stress". The A. F. of L. bureaucracy has allied itself with the reactionary rulers of American finance capitalism. Therefore the struggle against monopoly capitalism is impossible without a struggle against this labor bureaucracy and the whole social-fascist retinue.

The facts revealed in the Darrow report must be used to convince wider masses of workers and all those oppressed by the rule of monopoly capitalism, that capitalism cannot plan, that capitalism cannot be reformed, that it is necessary to abolish it and replace it with Socialism. We must further point out that the growth of monopolies is the direct result of the "economic planning" of the N.R.A. If anything, the N.R.A. has demonstrated that "economic planning" under capitalism is being defeated at every step because behind it are concealed the irreconcilable contradictions and the struggle of classes in capitalist society. Furthermore, the N.R.A. has demonstrated that the more the bourgeoisie attempts to "plan" and "regulate" its economy, the greater the growth of its contradictions. There is no purely economic way out of the crisis. The economic "planning" of Darrow will meet the same fate.

There is only one way to a planned economy and emancipation from the rule of monopoly capitalism. This is when the working class under the leadership of its Party forcibly overthrows capitalism and establishes the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only then can it proceed with the planned, economic, political, and cultural reconstruction of society. The toiling masses of this country can look to the example set by the Russian workers. From the Russian working class we learn that when the working class captures power, destroys the bourgeois state machine, drives out the bourgeoisie, then the revolutionary class, led by the Communist Party, not only itself develops tremendous revolutionary energy, but releases all the creative forces of the revolution which were hitherto suppressed. Therefore the road of the Communist Party in America is the only correct road to follow in the complete emancipation of the proletariat and all the oppressed and exploited from the bloody rule of American trusts and monopolies.

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The Socialist Party Convention—A Communist Estimate

By V. J. JEROME

THE Detroit convention of the Socialist Party once more emphasizes the bankruptcy of social-democracy. Never have the claims of the S.P. to being a revolutionary working class party proved more hollow; never have the Socialist drapings which the S.P. leaders of all shades hang over their policy of betrayal shown themselves more threadbare. The convention gave no evidence of an iota of genuine working class policy. Its declarations and decisions, notwithstanding their "Left" semblance, are a tissue of evasions and subterfuges to put over the class program of the bourgeoisie. Despite the restiveness of the proletarian rank and file in the S.P. and the Young Peoples Socialist League, the ferment hailed as rejuvenation by the bourgeois, social-democrat, and renegade press, turned out to be in reality the ferment of decomposition. It was a convention characterized by desperate artifice and maneuvering on the part of a crisis-torn leadership seeking the most effective method of holding together a party in whose "socialism" the broad membership is fast losing its illusions. It was a convention of wranglings for a new "declaration of principles" calculated, better than the old, to prevent the proletarian united front for which the S.P. rank and file has shown itself increasingly eager.

The convention took place in a situation tense with militant mass struggles—amid the greatest strike wave since 1919; in the wake of the colossal strikes of Minneapolis, Toledo, the Pacific Coast, and Alabama; in the shadow of an impending gigantic steel strike; in a situation characterized by mass unemployed movements; by the growing united front campaign for the passage of the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill (H.R. 7598) which has penetrated more than two thousand A. F. of L. locals, despite the opposition of the bureaucracy; and by widening campaigns against fascism and war.

In the second wave of strike struggles since the enactment of the N.R.A., a changing character is to be noted, in the direction of a higher political level. While the strike wave of last year repre-

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sented the initial stage of disillusionment in the Recovery Act, a stage at which the workers were in the main still thinking in terms of the pledges of the N.R.A., today the strikes signify open militant opposition to the N.R.A. itself.

The promises of Roosevelt are now bared to all as so much demagogy designed to conceal the class character of the New Deal. The government subsidies to bankers, railroad magnates and insurance companies; the further impoverishment and oppression of the workers and the toiling farmers; the mounting cost of living and the steady reduction of real wages; the strike-breaking and union-fascizing apparatus of the N.R.A.; the promotion of company unions through the instrumentality of Section 7A of the N.R.A.; the intensified police brutality and the increasing use of militia for suppressing strikes; the enrichment of the big farmers and the bankers at the expense of the agricultural workers and the poor and middle farmers; the fiendish oppression of the Negro masses and the drive against the foreign-born workers; the employment of the Public Works Program for preparing a new imperialist war—this is the hideous image which stares through the now transparent mask of the "New Deal" at the American workers who stand up to battle for their living standards and their rights.

We know that only yesterday, in unison with the corrupt officialdom of the A. F. of L., the S.P. leadership hailed the N.R.A. as a new Magna Carta for the American workers. At a time when the Communist Party, reacting instantaneously with Marxist-Leninist clarity to the real purposes of the N.R.A., declared: "In the labor section of the New Deal are to be seen the clearest examples of the tendencies towards fascism", the S. P. leaders commended the New Deal to the American working class. Shortly after his inauguration into the presidency, Roosevelt received a formal visit at the White House from the "old guard" Hillquit and the "militant" Thomas, who paid him their "socialist" homage and afterward issued a declaration to the press in praise of the "good points" in the New Deal. In his pamphlet, *The New Deal, A Socialist Analysis*, republished as recently as March, 1934, Thomas wrote of Roosevelt's program:

> "By and large it is an emergency effort to increase spending power for farmers and city workers and somewhat to lighten the load of mortgagees and small home owners. It is an attempt to impose some restrictions on the most vicious forms of exploitation."

In chorus with the Greens and the Lewises, Thomas told the workers who were rising in struggle against the N.R.A.: "I think strikes are inadvisable at present." (*New York Herald Tribune*,

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August 8, 1933.) The need for such urgings was stressed by Senator Wagner, "big gun", on the labor front, for the Roosevelt administration, and guest of honor at the A. F. of L. convention. Wagner declared:

> "Those who tend to destroy the opportunities for fruitful industrial relations by quick and fanciful resort to strikes and other forms of warfare must be given strong counsel."

Loyal Norman Thomas, as we have seen, gave that strong counsel.

Today the S.P. declares: "The N.R.A. is not a step towards socialism". But who ever said that it was, if not the Socialist Party itself through its arch-leader Norman Thomas? It was this very man, today top leader of the "militants", who proclaimed the N.R.A. to be a step in the direction of Socialism. He it was who wrote in the New York *Herald Tribune*, September 10, 1933:

> "The great hope of the New Deal is that it may make it a little easier for the masses of true workers in farm, mine, factory, school, laboratory, office and wherever the honest work of the world is done to advance toward a truly Socialist society."

Today the Leftward pressure of the workers makes such open support of the N.R.A. no longer safe. The S.P. leaders are now obliged to efface the seal of "socialism" which they stamped upon the N.R.A. "We must therefore have more left resolutions", says the "Left" Biermiller in the name of the Resolutions Committee.

Yes, they must have "Left" resolutions. Social-democracy is in crisis. And when the devil is ill, the devil a monk would be.

The present groupings in the S.P. reflect what is going on in the social-democratic parties everywhere. They signify social-democracy's loss of stability when capitalism's stabilization ends. As the general crisis of capitalism deepens, the labor aristocracy offers a constantly narrowing economic base for social-democracy. The approaching cycle of imperialist wars with its preparatory waves of chauvinism is tending more and more to align the social-democracy of each country on the side of its own bourgeoisie; this inevitably hastens the collapse of the Second International. In addition, in a number of countries, where the bourgeoisie has dispensed with parliamentarism, it has discarded social-democracy from the government set-up. The increasing impoverishment of the masses, the rising tide of class struggle, the disillusionment of the masses as regards bourgeois democracy, and the widening influence of the Communist Parties contribute further to the loss of social-democratic influence. A leading factor in attracting the masses to the side of Communism

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is the victorious advance of the Soviet Union despite the antagonism of international capital and the Soviet-hating social-democracy. The imperialist role of the British Labor Party, made manifest to new millions of workers by the inevitably open betrayal of the MacDonalds, the Snowdens, and the Mosleys; the anti-working class character of the Swedish and Danish Socialist-controlled governments; the betrayal of the Spanish revolution by the Socialist Party which entered the Azana government in a coalition against the working class; and, especially, the absolute exposure of social-democracy in Germany and Austria as road-paver to fascism, have resulted in the moral and organizational decomposition, not only of the German and Austrian Socialist Parties, but of all the parties in the Second International. The collapse of German and Austrian social-democracy precipitated throughout the social-democratic parties severe criticism of, and dissatisfaction with, the tactics and policies of the Second International. The events in Germany and Austria have raised sharply in the social-democratic ranks such questions as the road to power, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the attitude to war, and the united front with the Communists.

Thus, in Germany, counter-revolutionary social-democracy, disgraced in the eyes of the workers whom it delivered into the toils of fascism, is reappearing in the guise of "revolutionary socialism". This is merely a renewed attempt to misguide the liberation struggle of the German working class. *New Beginning*, a pamphlet by Miles, has been advanced as the platform of "revolutionary" social-democracy that claims to set itself up in opposition to the Wels-Stampfer leadership which fled to Prague. The document speaks of "the collapse of the German Social-Democratic Party"; it sees "a certain advance on the attitude of a few weeks ago, when the *entire* party leadership advocated a policy of submission to fascism"; it calls for a program of "revolutionary Marxism". But, scrape the red veneer of the *New Beginning* group and you will find the yellow social-democracy of Wels, Leipart, Stampfer and Co.

Take but one instance of this "revolutionary socialism"—its analysis of fascism. *New Beginning* advances the theory that "there exists throughout the whole world a general tendency, more or less pronounced, *towards fascism*". Note, not the counter-revolutionary drive of monopoly capital, but a *general tendency*, which includes, of course, the movement of the working class! Indeed, it is the toiling masses, according to *New Beginning*, which are *the* driving force in this tendency. That is so, says *New Beginning*, because the disorganization of capitalism by the crisis, the unbearable oppression of the toiling masses, the steady disillusionment with bourgeois

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democracy, as well as the centralized system of monopoly capital, inspire in the broad masses a "leadership-principle", "a growing desire for a 'strong hand' which shall clean out the 'stable' with an 'iron broom' and establish a 'juster order' ". The masses develop this "leadership" illusion "out of their intimidation in face of the terrible consequences of the capitalist class".

The conclusion which *New Beginning* draws from this "analysis" is set forth as follows:

> "Hence the revolutionary driving forces born of capitalist contradictions are transformed into blind, destructive natural forces, which lead towards reaction instead of towards progress, that is, socialism. These forces become the driving forces of fascism, which are themselves the result of historical spontaneity, the automatic historical process of capitalist decline."

We see clearly now what this "revolutionary" social-democracy purposes. Its aim is to blind the working class to the true nature, source, and process of fascism in order to thwart the struggle for the defeat of fascism. Instead of showing the passage of capital to open, terrorist dictatorship in desperation, against the indignation of the masses and the impending revolutionary crisis, *New Beginning* presents fascism as an outgrowth of the revolutionary working class. For the revolutionary, dialectic-materialist characterization of fascism as given by the Communist International, namely that it is "the open, terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinist, and most imperialist elements of finance capital",* we have here a counter-revolutionary, psychoanalytic "leader" complex with a perverted use of dialectics to represent the toiling masses as the driving force of fascism. To clear the social-fascist leadership of guilt in promoting the advent of fascism, these "revolutionary" social-fascists place the guilt upon the revolutionary urge of the working class. From such an analysis there can be but one conclusion: *To suppress fascism, the working class must suppress the revolutionary force within itself.* Precisely what social-democracy has taught all along. "I hate it [revolution] like sin"**—declared the honored social-democratic president of Germany, Ebert.

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* Thesis of the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.

***The Making of New Germany*—the memoirs of Philipp Scheidemann. Scheidemann relates that Ebert held a number of secret conferences with Prince Max von Baden, the last Imperial Chancellor. At once of these conferences the Prince asked him: "Shall I have you at my side in the fight against the Social Revolution?" Ebert replied: "If the Kaiser does not abdicate, Social Revolution must come. But I don't want it; I hate it like sin." Scheidemann quotes the Prince as saying on another occasion: "The Revolu-

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Quite in keeping with its counter-revolutionary thesis, *New Beginning* directs all its spleen, not at fascism, not at social-fascism which has devoted itself to holding back the revolutionary forces inherent in the proletariat, but at the Communist Party which works to inspire and organize those forces.

New Beginning pretends to be enamored of the Soviet Union. "The Soviet Union," it declares, "is, according to our views, a socialist state". But in the very next sentence we read:

> "It belongs to the type of centralized party State which is to be met with in Italy and now also in Germany."

Such double-dealing should make even Otto Bauer envious. Here is a lesson in "Left" social-fascism: Call the Soviet Union Socialist, then declare it to be of the same type with the fascist State —and Hitler's National Socialism becomes Socialism!

New Beginning aspires to "Leftness" through using the phrase "centralized party-State" which connotes the dictatorship of a party, not of the class, the proletariat. Thus, we come across the statement:

> "The setting up of a socialist state means that the Socialist Party must concentrate the whole power of the state exclusively in its own hands."

And since, as revolutionary Marxism teaches us, only a class can be in dictatorship, the motive of the party-state "theory" is to deflect the working class from its objective—seizure of power. Hence, in proposing the "party-State", this "revolutionary social-democracy" has for its goal a dictatorship that is not of the proletariat, in other words, a bourgeois dictatorship with a "centralized party-State", which is fascism.

Finally, *New Beginning* advances as the immediate objective the restoration of bourgeois democracy. In this way, by means of confused "Left"-sounding talk about dictatorship, *New Beginning* aims to serve the fascist program by substituting, for the armed struggle to overthrow fascism and establish a Soviet Germany, an unending seesaw between bourgeois democracy and fascism, between the veiled and the open forms of bourgeois dictatorship.

What was more natural than for Kautsky to ask: "Is this a new socialist program"?

The break-up of social-democracy into ultra-Rights, "Centrists", and neo-"Lefts" is taking place in a number of other Second Inter-

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tion is on the eve of success; we can't smash it, but perhaps we can throttle it. . . . If the abdicating Kaiser appoints Ebert Chancellor, there is a faint hope for the monarchy."

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national parties. In France, the Socialist Party recently went **"Left"**, bringing the *Bataille Socialiste* group, led by Zyromski, into leadership. At the same time, the ultra-reactionary Renaudel-Marquet wing split away and formed the Neo-Socialist group, a frankly fascist outfit. Similarly, the Polish Socialist Party adopted a number of "Left" resolutions at its recent congress. Last year's Paris Conference of "Left" Socialist Parties was a veritable cave of Adullam in which were gathered "two-and-a-half", "fourth", and various twilight-zone internationalists, not excluding, of course, the renegades from Communism. In Germany the official Social-Democratic Party also turned "revolutionary"! Wels, Stampfer and the entire Prague leadership, splitters of the working class movement in the face of the fascist onslaught; they of the ilk of Leipart, head of the Socialist-controlled trade unions, who, as Otto Wels confessed before the Second International Congress at Paris last year, declared after the Reichstag fire against a general strike, "because it would lead to civil war" *; they whose Reichstag representatives voted, on May 17, confidence in the Hitler regime—now come forward with a let-bygones-be-bygones-program of "revolutionary" social-democracy, swearing off reformism and legalism and proclaiming in new, "Left"-sounding phrases—"The struggle for democracy"! A "new beginning"—of an old policy. Adhering to the precept of the adaptive Henry of Navarre, "Paris is well worth a mass", these "Left" social-fascists are intent upon checking the struggle toward the proletarian revolution, even if it costs them the word *revolution* to do so.

It is in the light of the process of disintegration through which international social-democracy is today passing that one should look at the present-day groupings in the American Socialist Party.

At least five groupings could be traced in the S.P. leadership prior to the Detroit Convention. These were:

(1) The die-hard "old guard", whose leader, until his death, was Morris Hillquit. This group embraces the most reactionary elements in the S.P. leadership. It is knit up closely with the sell-out officialdom of the A. F. of L. and with the N.R.A. apparatus. Its shining lights include an array of A. F. of L. officials and legal talents who might well compare with the A. F. of L. Executive Council itself, in the art of corruption, betrayal, and riding roughshod over the rank and file. This group is backed by the notorious yellow-socialist *Jewish Daily Forward*, a sensation-mongering, reactionary sheet that does not halt at *agent-provocateur* tactics. It is,

* See Heinrich Ehrlich, *The Struggle for Revolutionary Socialism*, New York, 1934, p. 12.

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to boot, a celebrated factory and clearing-house for the most vicious anti-Soviet fabrications. It sports on the front page the seal of the N.R.A. Its editor-in-chief, Abraham Cahan, who draws $20,000 a year, declared recently that President Roosevelt is entitled to membership in the Socialist Party. The open counter-revolutionary policy to which the "old guard" is committed is exemplified in the following defense of the kulaks, made by Cahan in the pamphlet, *Hear the Other Side*:

> "Stalin puts the blame on those peasants whom he calls 'kulaks' or 'class enemies', that is, enemies of farm collectivization. . . . The farmer he damns as a 'kulak' is actually one of the hardest-working and thriftiest peasants. He is of sober habits and one of the best citizens. His small farm is, next to his children, the dearest thing in the world to him."

(2) The Left-liberal pacifist grouping represented, before the convention, by Norman Thomas, the silk-gloved gentry in the party, those who are "shocked" by the corruption of capitalism, who would like to see a "clean City Hall". They urge "ethics" in the trade unions, realizing the danger in the reckless openness of the anti-labor practices indulged in by corrupt "socialist" union officials. This group resorts to declarations calculated to make it appear to the Left of the "old guard" on such issues as the Soviet Union, the united front, and war.

(3) The "militants", the motley, heterogeneous group that gained the ascendency at the convention and with a section of which Thomas has now identified himself. Characteristic of the double-tongued "Centrist" position which this group adopts, is the *Program of the New York Militant Socialists*. This document indulges in ringing phrases about "taking power", "workers' democracy", "workers' councils", and "dictatorship by the revolutionary classes"; nevertheless, it defends the treachery of social-democrats in power and their haste "to liquidate the revolutions for the benefit of bourgeois republics", on the grounds that such a policy "was, at least in part, due to a fear of dictatorship, because of the manner in which it has functioned in Soviet Russia". It explains its rejection of the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" by saying:

> "The use of the phrase 'dictatorship of the proletariat' may not be advisable to express the ideas for which it stands in our day-to-day propaganda, because of the misunderstanding of the phrase and the ill repute attached to dictatorship."

We have here, as in *New Beginning*, the deliberate confusion of the dictatorship of the proletariat with fascist rule, the purpose being to stab the Soviet Union (for which the "militants" profess such

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deep friendship) and to cover opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat with the hypocritical pretext of rejecting merely the name, because of "the ill repute attached to dictatorships".

The hypocrisy becomes even more potent in the further statement that "while this [proletarian dictatorship] is a valid revolutionary concept of the transitional state it need not be emphasized at the present stage of the Socialist movement in America". The rejection of the name reveals itself as the rejection of the essence!

In this manner, the "militants" that pretend to be for the dictatorship of the proletariat and those who, with Thomas, declare themselves to be for "democracy" show themselves to be of one stripe.

The *Program of the New York Militant Socialists* speaks of "the achievement of state power", but, insofar as the road is concerned, it holds: "We believe that there is more than one way to power. . . ." A leading "theoretician" of this group, Haim Kantorovitch, puts the matter as follows:

> "There is no one way in which the proletariat may get political power. It may get political power as a result of the utter collapse of the existing state power as in Russia [note, not the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois State!—V.J.J.]; as a result of a revolution brought about by a defeat in war as in Germany; as a result of a successful revolution as in Spain; or as a result of an electoral victory as in Great Britain. The way to political power in democratic countries will, in all probability, be the way of an electoral victory, if fascism will not intervene and make an end to democracy. The problem is not so much how to get power as how to hold it, and how to use it."*

Here we have the sort of "power" to which these "revolutionists" propose to lead the American workers—the political "power" which the German workers got at the hands of Scheidemann and Noske; the "power" which the social-democrats have brought to the workers in Spain, after uniting with the bourgeois government to check the forward pressure of the proletarian revolution; the "power" which the British workers achieved at the hands of MacDonald! With such Macchiavellian Austro-Marxism are these self-styled "militants" preparing to add an American chapter to the history of social-democratic betrayals of proletarian revolutions.

(4) The Revolutionary Policy Committee—the ultra-"Lefts", prototype, in certain respects, of the German *New Beginning* group. Because of its flamboyant "Left" presumptions, the R.P.C., although numerically small, constitutes a serious factor in the present-day efforts of American social-fascism to rehabilitate itself in the

* *Towards Socialist Reorientation*, p. 18.

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eyes of the working class. For this reason it is necessary to make a study of its declarations and practices.

The R.P.C. issued in April of this year an *Appeal to the Membership of the Socialist Party* signed by forty-seven more or less leading members of the party. In language charged with "revolutionism", the signers avow that they have broken with gradualism and legality; they declare themselves in favor of a "Workers' Republic" and even of the dictatorship of the proletariat. To achieve the aim of Socialism, declares the *Appeal*, "it is necessary to acquire possession of the state power so as to transform capitalist society into socialist society by means of the dictatorship of the proletariat".

Almost Communism, it would seem. Indeed, the renegades from Communism have flung their arms about the R.P.C. brotherhood for "its distinct and generally revolutionary position" (Lovestone, *Workers Age*, June 15, 1934); for having "adopted in the main a revolutionary position, especially on the question of the road to power and proletarian dictatorship" (Gitlow, *Labor Front*, June, 1934); for approaching "the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism, that is, Communism" (Cannon, *Militant*, May 5, 1934).

Yet the first serious glance at the R.P.C. platform reveals its crass anti-Marxian character. Typical of its European neo-"Left" confederates, the R.P.C. makes no mention of the necessity for the revolutionary destruction of the bourgeois State apparatus. The lesson which Marx and Engels gave to the world proletariat, in the light of the experiences of the Paris Commune—that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machine and set it going for its own purposes", but that its task is "*to smash it*"—this lesson is completely absent from the "revolutionary Marxism" of the R.P.C. The R.P.C. may declare that "the working class State will be an entirely new type of State", it may even concede that "when the decisive hour approaches the conflict between the classes assumes a violent character"; but when it leaves out of its program the basic Marxian teaching on the shattering of the bourgeois State apparatus, the "preliminary condition" without which the proletariat in alliance with the poor farmers cannot make its revolution, *it leaves out the dictatorship of the proletariat.* Seizure of power remains but an empty phrase, without the road to power.

The R.P.C. is of a piece with the general "Left" manifestation in social-democracy today. Its aim is to preserve the social-fascist Second International at the moment of its disintegration. Thus, the *Appeal* declares:

> "The Socialist Party of America must make every effort to get the above principles adopted by the Labor and Socialist International

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in order that it may be the effective instrument of promoting the world revolution."

Like *New Beginning*, the *Appeal* pretends to be critical of German social-democracy, charging it with having taken a middle position:

"There is no longer a middle road. The middle road was taken in Germany and led to death."

To all the heinous crimes which German social-democracy committed against the working class—the large-hearted attitude: Forget and forgive! "Socialist" coalition with the bourgeoisie against the working class is presented to us under the apologetic euphemism, "middle road". The road which social-democracy paved for Hitler is charted in the program of the R.P.C. as the "middle road". Truly, the loving kindness of "Left" social-fascism towards its fallen Right twin-brother!

The same whitewashing policy is evidenced in the attitude of the R.P.C. to the American S.P. Nowhere in its manifesto does this nth-degree "revolutionary" battalion level a single word of open criticism at the reactionary Hillquit-Thomas-Oneal-Cahan leadership. Why, indeed, bring up the past? It will make it so much more difficult to set in with the *New Beginning*.

And yet, be it not said that the platform of the R.P.C. completely abandons criticism. There is, indeed, a statement to the effect that the Communist united front tactics "have been proven to be disruptive to the development of a revolutionary labor movement".

If proof were needed, this statement furnishes it, that the R.P.C. is at least as revolutionary as the *Jewish Daily Forward!*

We have, for good measure, the group whose ideology is represented by Joseph W. Sharts, Ohio State Secretary of the Socialist Party—the ultra-chauvinist and fascist elements in the S.P., most clearly resembling the Neo-Socialists of France. We quote here from a recent declaration of J. W. Sharts:

"The socialist appeal which relies on a vague internationalism and a mythical working class instinct of solidarity is easily crushed whenever it meets the elemental emotional forces roused under the name of patriotism.

"These great traditions cluster around the Stars and Stripes and make it worthy to be fought for, regardless of the capitalist connections in recent years.

"Not by the pacifist but by the patriotic approach lies our path to power and freedom."

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These are the "socialist" forces that gathered at Detroit to decide the destiny of the American working class.

What position did the convention take on the N.R.A. and the present strike struggles? What program of action did it propose to the American workers for meeting in effective struggle the brutal anti-labor offensive which goes by the name "New Deal"?

Under the pressure of the rank and file, the S.P. leaders were driven to mild criticism of the N.R.A. But that this "change of heart" does not mean real opposition to the Act is clear when we turn to the Resolution on N.R.A. and Labor. This Resolution offers no real program of struggle against the N.R.A. codes and the hunger-fascism-and-war preparation regime of Roosevelt. Instead, we have the continued misleading line that the N.R.A. is in itself good for the working class. The Resolution which in one place states that "even if the N.R.A. were perfectly administered, it could not abolish unemployment", implies in the same breath that what is wrong is, not the purpose of the N.R.A., but its lax enforcement. "The colossal failure of the government to enforce the law. . . ." "Codes are unenforced", the Resolution wails. If only the N.R.A. apparatus would fulfill what Roosevelt set out to do for the American workers!—is the conclusion that must logically be drawn from such "criticism". The "inner goodness" of the N.R.A. is further set forth in the Resolution by the statement; "The chief benefit was the impetus it gave to labor organization".

A frank avowal of this "impetus it gave to labor organization" was made at the A. F. of L. Convention by Secretary of Labor Perkins (another guest of honor):

> "The fifty-third annual convention of your organization, thanks to the vision and courage of President Roosevelt in making possible the National Recovery Act, *sees labor as an integral part of our modern state.*" (Italics mine—V.J.J.)

Speaking to her friends, to the dependable labor officialdom without whose collaboration the plan couldn't very well work, Miss Perkins could afford to state how the N.R.A. proposed to organize the workers—by integrating the trade unions into the capitalist State apparatus; to do, that is, what Mussolini and Hitler have done.

And this process of fascizing the trade unions, of destroying the revolutionary unions and incorporating the reformist unions into the N.R.A. apparatus with the connivance of the labor bureaucracy counting in its midst foremost S.P. leaders—this is what the S.P. Resolution called "the chief benefit"!

The absence of any real opposition to the N.R.A. is most conclusively demonstrated in the policy on trade unions which the Con-

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vention adopted. Obviously the position on trade unions involved taking a stand on the policy and practices of the A. F. of L. officialdom. The report of the Resolutions Committee contained on the matter a timid paragraph which read:

> "The N.R.A. has also shown fundamental weaknesses in the American Labor Movement. It has shown up more clearly than any other event the obsolete ideology of the A. F. of L. The many instances in which leaders have counselled workers against striking or even ordered them back to work in the face of an overwhelming indication by the membership of a desire to strike, has indicated their abandonment of the belief that unions are fighting organizations. It has shown the inadequacy of the A. F. of L. structure in organizational work and the positive harm of the craft form of organization."

It is significant that this "revolutionary" paragraph was brought in by a committee consisting mainly of "militants" with even a member of the so-called Revolutionary Policy Committee. With or without such an "indictment", the Resolution clearly offered no effective opposition to the A. F. of L. misleaders. But even this timid paragraph was too much for the Convention. The Resolution, as adopted, contained *not a word* of criticism against the A. F. of L. bureaucrats. By deliberately refusing to declare itself against the traitorous labor leaders, the S.P. leadership, in effect, reendorsed the anti-labor policy pursued by the Greens, the Wolls, and the Lewises; reendorsed the strike-breaking, sell-out, and company-unionizing policy of the A. F. of L. officials; reendorsed their loyalty to the exploiting class and its government; reendorsed their drive towards fascism and their provocations to imperialist intervention in the Soviet Union.

There can be no talk here of differing "Left" and "old guard" positions on the question. The so-called "militants" *provided the majority vote* to pass this reactionary trade union Resolution. The Resolutions Committee itself consented to the deletion of the offending paragraph. The National Chairman of the party and outstanding leader of the "militants", Leo Krzycki, himself an A. F. of L. bureaucrat, made a strong appeal against offending the A. F. of L. leaders lest the S. P. "get no more such opportunities to cooperate with the trade union movement". This same "militant" left the Convention to proceed to Toledo to cooperate with the A. F. of L. misleader Ramsey in betraying the Auto-Lite strikers. Well might the "old guard" *Jewish Daily Forward* gloat over the adoption of the trade union Resolution, saying that here after all was the thing that mattered—"a question that has a practical, real, and immediate significance".

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On every one of the important issues facing the American working class today, the Convention either evaded a stand or yielded openly to the "old guard".

The Resolution on Farmers' Problems is based on "fundamentals" that are bourgeois through and through; it has nothing in common with Socialism. It draws no difference between the classes of farmers. The toiling farmers and the rich farmers are lumped together, though their interests are directly opposed. Nothing is said about the class struggle in the countryside. Without this, any program, no matter how well-sounding, is a mockery. Furthermore, the class alliance of workers and farmers is not even mentioned. Without such an alliance, the farmers' problems cannot be solved, nor the victory of the proletariat attained.

When we come to the question of immediate farm relief measures, we find no demand for smashing the Roosevelt A.A.A. program which oppresses the toiling farmers, no demand for cancelling all mortgages and debts of the small and middle farmers; instead, we have a proposal for the government to take over the debts. Point 6 in this Resolution advocates "agricultural planning" as the solution—agricultural planning under capitalism, which is precisely Roosevelt's program. Proposals for genuine relief; demands dealing with the drought, the cancellation of all back taxes; resistance to evictions, foreclosures, sheriff's sales; the struggle against the vicious injunctions directed at the militant farmers' organizations; the struggles of the agricultural workers and the Southern sharecroppers against their plight under the New Deal—these are completely missing from the "Left-wing" S. P. program, as they are from Roosevelt's.

A statement of policy on Trade Unions and a Congressional Elections platform without a word on the strike wave, on police brutality and the use of the military; without a word on the government policy of strike-breaking, company unionization, and bludgeoning with injunctions; without a word on wage-cuts, on the struggle for higher wages and union recognition; without a direct demand for unemployment and social insurance, or for the transfer of the war funds to relief for the unemployed; without so much as a syllable of opposition to lynchings and jim-crow!

No program of struggle on the Scottsboro case and the fascist-chauvinist anti-Negro, anti-Semitic, and anti-foreign-born offensive. No declaration for the defense of the Soviet Union.

The celebrated "Declaration of Principles" which the Convention adopted, allegedly as a break with the reactionary "Old Guard", is in essence the old anti-socialism newly phrased. The Declaration

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is characterized by the omission of the very core of revolutionary Marxism—the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Instead, we have the deluding reformist policy which helped fascism come to power in Germany and Austria:

> "In its struggles for a new society, the S.P. seeks to attain its objectives by peaceful and orderly means. . . . The S.P. proclaims anew its faith in economic and political democracy. . . ."

The Declaration speaks of the doom of capitalism; but it indicates no revolutionary way out. Instead, it states:

> "If it [capitalism] can be superseded by a majority vote, the Socialist Party will rejoice."

Another possibility indicated is:

> "If the capitalist system should collapse in a general chaos and confusion. . . ."

Both these possibilities are the predictions of misleaders. For one who lays claim to the title *Socialist* must know that the end of capitalism will not come through the attainment of a majority vote by the workers (for the capitalists will never yield their power because of democratic principles) nor through the automatic collapse of the present order. The end of capitalism will come through its revolutionary overthrow by the working class in alliance with and leading the toiling masses of city and country. It will come through the establishment of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. Neither the road to proletarian power nor the objective itself, the dictatorship of the proletariat, is set forth among the "principles" of this "militant" Declaration. They are not present in the Declaration because the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat would mean the destruction of the dictatorship of capitalism, that dictatorship which social-democracy, "Left" no less than Right, is pledged to uphold.

The Declaration prates about "economic and political democracy", "true democracy", etc. Such slogans have nothing in common with the revolutionary objective of the working class—Soviet Power as the only way out of hunger, fascism, and war. Even its use of the phrase "workers' democracy" has no meaning other than the "democracy" which capitalism has to offer to the workers. For, proletarian democracy, the broad democracy which the vast toiling population is today enjoying in the Soviet Union, is conditioned by the dictatorship of the proletariat which was established through the proletarian revolution. Nothing, however, could be further from the thoughts of the S. P. leaders. That the "workers' democracy"

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of the Detroit Convention is the "democracy" of all the other conventions of the S. P., is clearly admitted by Norman Thomas in the *New Leader* for June 16:

> "Nowhere does the Declaration of Principles in words or by implication support any kind of dictatorship."

By seeking to substitute for the slogan "dictatorship of the proletariat" hypocritical talk about "workers' democracy", the S. P. Convention, for all its "militancy", glorified the illusion of democracy fostered by the bourgeoisie and the Second International. Precisely this chatter about democracy on the part of the German and Austrian social-democratic leaders weakened the struggle of the working class in those countries against the fascist offensives by its theory of a united front with a supposed "lesser evil" instead of a united proletarian front against the bourgeoisie. The "democracy" talk of the Detroit S. P. Convention is of a kind with the "democracy" of the Leiparts, the Otto Welses, and the Bauers — the "democracy" which is the womb in which the monster, fascism, is begotten, the "democracy" of social-fascism.

Not a jot more socialistic is the so-called anti-war clause in the Declaration of Principles. Despite the thunder from the Right, despite the charges "Communism", "Bolshevism", on the part of the "old guard", the anti-war declaration of the Detroit Convention is an admixture of the good old social-patriotism and social-pacifism in a new guise. The Declaration of Principles avers:

> "The Socialist Party is opposed to militarism, imperialism, and war . . . war cannot be tolerated by Socialists, or preparedness for war. They will unitedly seek to develop trustworthy working class instruments for the peaceable settlement of international disputes and conflicts . . . they will loyally support, in the tragic event of war, any of their comrades who for anti-war activities or refusal to perform war service come into conflict with public opinion or the law . . . they will refuse collectively to sanction or support any international war; they will, on the contrary, by agitation and opposition do their best not to be broken up by the war, but to break up the war. They will meet war and the detailed plans for war already mapped out by the war-making arms of the government by massed war resistance, organized so far as practicable in a general strike of labor unions and professional groups in a united front to make the waging of war a practical impossibility and to convert the capitalist war crisis into a victory for Socialism."

There is nothing in this pompous pronouncement to differentiate it essentially from the position on war adopted by Kautsky who, as Lenin characterized him, "quite meaninglessly 'reconciles' the fundamental idea of social-chauvinism, the defense of the fatherland in this war, with a diplomatic sham concession to the Left, such as

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abstaining from voting appropriations, verbal expression of opposition, etc.".

The distinguishing characteristic of the truly revolutionary position on war is, as Lenin taught, its expression in a program of action that puts forward as the central task the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war. Without such a slogan of action, all "declarations of principles" regarding "massed war resistance", all high resolves "to break up the war", constitute a renunciation of the revolutionary struggle against war and remain, therefore, so much "revolutionary" chatter.

The phrase "to convert the capitalist war crisis into a victory for Socialism" is empty of content unless it implies the struggle for the defeat of "one's own" government in the imperialist war. This calls for the utter rejection of the deceptive classification of wars between robber imperialist Powers as "just" and "unjust", "defensive" and "offensive". It means the rejection of the grounds on which social-democracy, in 1914, turned social-chauvinist in "defense of the fatherland".

Were these grounds rejected by the Detroit convention?

We call upon Norman Thomas to answer. Two weeks after the adoption of the "Declaration of Principles", Thomas explained the intent of the anti-war clause in the *New Leader* for June 16:

> "The Spanish-American War and the World War were not the result of attacks on us, but of our aggressive action. . . . Our declaration deals with the kind of war that our analysis of facts leads us to expect. *If by some miracle there is a wholly different type of war, there will be plenty of time in the light of Socialist principles to change our position.*" (Italics mine—V.J.J.)

Uttered in defense of the *Declaration of Principles* against the charges of "Communism", the statement casts a powerful ray on the true nature of the anti-war policy to which the Detroit Convention committed the Socialist Party. It is the policy adopted in 1914 by the Kaiser socialists, the Russian Mensheviks, and the French and British social-patriots, each of which urged the workers to "defend the fatherland" in "a wholly different type of war"—the policy, indeed, for which the less diplomatic Sharts of Ohio all too bluntly declared himself when he stated at the Convention "that he loved America above all else and that he would not be bound by 'red internationalists', but would stand by his country whenever he saw fit" (*New Leader*, June 9, 1934).

If the "militants" and the "R.P.C." speak differently in the present situation, let us not forget the explanation offered by Norman Thomas:

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> "What Socialist could say less? . . . Remember even what the British Labor Party's parliamentary group had to say about a strike against war. Remember the kind of questions Socialists are asked about the road to power. In the light of all this, is not the Declaration of Principles a sound Socialist document?" (*New Leader*, June 16, 1934.)

The sham character of "Left" social-democracy is evidenced at every turn when the moment comes for translating its professed "revolutionism" into action. *In every such instance* the action spells a complete capitulation to the Right. A most recent instance of this was offered by the Toulouse Congress of the French Socialist Party, when the Zyromski-Pivert group, notwithstanding its flaming phrases about preparing for the revolution, voted for Leon Blum's ambiguous and reformist motion on the program of action (the thing that mattered!), according to which the party (not the class!—similarly, the American "Lefts") is to aspire to power "by intensifying its educational propaganda, by stamping upon it a character of agitation and organized protest".

"Left" social-democracy's surrender to the Right was nowhere more flagrantly exhibited than at the Detroit Convention of the Socialist Party. The rejection, already referred to, of the paragraph felt to be "offensive" to the A. F. of L. leaders well shows that. Equally significant is the defeat of the "Left"-wing Report of the American Socialist Party's majority delegation to the Paris Congress of the Second International, upon Norman Thomas' warning that it would be "playing with fire" and "political suicide" to adopt a report that spoke of dictatorship, as *"the basis of the policy and tactics to be utilized by the Socialist Party"*. (*New Leader*, June 9, 1934; italics mine—V.J.J.). The capitulation to the "old guard" was at its clearest when the Convention, which was dominated preponderantly by the "militants" and "Lefts" who profess to be quite unlike the *Jewish Daily Forward* in their "friendship" for the Soviet Union, adjourned without adopting a resolution on the Soviet Union. Be it noted, though, that a resolution was submitted by the "militants" which read in part:

> "It is our opinion that the advances so far achieved make the rigid one party dictatorship no longer necessary and warrant a broader internal proletarian democracy to include all working class parties and groups that accept the Proletarian Dictatorship."

But since the "old guard" brought in its resolution which expressed *openly* its hatred of the Soviet Union, the "friendship" resolution of the "militants" which is so enamored of the dictatorship of the proletariat that it is ready to liquidate it, was evidently considered too "revolutionary".

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As regards the united front, the question involving the immediate practical steps for winning, through broad militant campaigns, the majority of the working class for the revolution, the vaunted "unity" platform of the "militants" and "Lefts" proved to be constructed of rotten boards and trap-doors. On May 26 the Central Committee of the Communist Party addressed itself to the members of the Socialist Party and to the delegates at the Detroit Convention with the second united-front offer since March, 1933.

The letter proposed a united front on the following issues:

> 1. For decisive wage increases and a shorter working week; for driving company unions out of the industries; for an energetic strike movement to win these demands; for a decisive fight against the policies of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy and for building a revolutionary trade union leadership.
>
> 2. For the immediate enactment of the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill (H.R. 7598); for a struggle for immediate relief; for building a strong, unified Unemployment Council movement.
>
> 3. For the immediate enactment of the Farmers' Emergency Relief Bill.
>
> 4. For the immediate enactment of the Bill for Negro Rights and to Suppress Lynching; for the liberation of the Scottsboro boys.
>
> 5. For the united struggle against war and fascism; to stop shipments of munitions; to defend the Soviet Union; for the freedom of Thaelmann and all anti-fascist prisoners in Germany.
>
> 6. For united action in localities, factories, and trade unions, on every question affecting the toiling masses.

The letter declared: "The Communist Party is prepared to cooperate with every worker and workers' organization that will really fight for these things".

What was the reply of the Convention?

The Resolutions Committee, consisting mainly of the "new guard" elements, adopted a resolution (as reported in *New Leader* for June 9, 1934) "denouncing Communist disruption and intrigue and calling for united action only by agreement between the Communist International and the Labor and Socialist [Second] International, and representing substantially the so-called 'old guard' point of view". The Convention preferred, however, to adopt no resolution on the united front, due to "the press of other business".(!)

Most ignominious was the capitulation of the fiery-tongued R.P.C. This brigade of swashbucklers actually never once stood up to offer a resolution of its own to the convention. The R.P.C. showed that it is second to none among the S. P. leaders in chicanery by bartering its "revolutionary" program for a seat on the National Executive Committee.

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How aptly we can apply here the words of Comrade Knorin spoken before the E.C.C.I. at its Thirteenth Plenum:

> "Every social-democratic party contains various fractions which reflect the ideological collapse of social-democracy; but it is the Rights who act. They are openly coming to fascism, openly harnessing themselves to the chariot of nationalism. The 'Lefts' remain passive and can only chatter, holding back the masses from going over to Communism. The 'Rights' act and organize; the 'Lefts' write 'Left' resolutions and talk with their radical phraseology, with their 'Left' speeches about the dictatorship of the proletariat, plans about the reforms of social-democracy, etc.; they try to keep the masses in the counter-revolutionary united front with the bourgeoisie. This is the division of labor, this is the role of the 'Lefts'."

Let no one be deceived by the "Left-wing" guise which this convention took on. The sudden "Leftness" of the Thomases and the Krzyckis is nothing but protective coloration for the S.P. leaders, who wish to run with the radicalized masses in order to betray them. As the *New York Times* editorial put it to reassure Mr. Thomas' capitalist friends of his abiding loyalty to them:

> "Many friends of Mr. Thomas will be surprised, and others pained, when they read of his going over to the extreme Left Wing of the Socialist Party. . . . One understands the pressure to which Mr. Thomas was subjected. There has been a steady push of the younger and more radical elements in the Socialist Party against what they think to be the obsolete 'ideology' of its older leaders. When it appeared that the impatient and short-cut Socialists had won a majority of the Socialist convention, Mr. Thomas apparently felt compelled to go along with them."

No! "Left-Wing" Thomas, the militant crusader, is still Reverend Thomas, the peacemaker with capitalism. Thomas, Krzycki & Co. are still of the same kidney as the treacherous S.P. leadership. Only the Left-radicalization of the social-democratic rank and file compels these misleaders to trim their treachery with "Left" phrases.

It is a characteristic feature of capitalism, when the revolutionary crisis grows imminent, to fall back for support on a reserve line in social-democracy—"Left" reformism.

The policy of "Left" reformism, or Centrism, has always been to subordinate the interests of the proletariat to those of the petty bourgeoisie. In the pre-War period, by its policy of vacillation and fence-straddling, Centrism sought to reduce the revolutionary Party to ineffectiveness in the struggle against revisionism. Draped in the flag of Marxism, it engaged in spectacular sham battles with the Bernsteins and the Millerands, leaving unfought the real battles against opportunism, as a result of which social-democracy eventually degenerated into social-imperialism and social-chauvinism.

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In the course of the World War, as the revolutionary elements in the social-democratic parties grew increasingly responsive to the Bolshevik slogans for the defeat of "one's own" government and the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war, Centrism underwent a metamorphosis into social-pacifism. As the crisis of capitalism became more manifest, as the hour of proletarian uprisings and revolutions neared, as the split in the social-democratic parties grew imminent, "Left" reformism came forward with its unctuous liberal-bourgeois "peace slogans", exemplified notably by Max Adler's advocacy of "organized international pacifism" and by Trotsky's slogan, "Neither victory nor defeat". By raising the illusory cry of "peace"; by centering the attack on war as such, without baring for attack the class character of imperialist war; social-pacifism merely exploited for reformist purposes the eagerness of the toiling masses in all lands for the cessation of the war; it brought forward no program of decisive struggle against imperialist war. By advancing the slogan, "Neither victory nor defeat", Trotskyism simply played the bourgeois pacifist role of endeavoring to save "one's own" bourgeoisie from defeat, that is, of halting the class struggle during war time, since the object of the struggle waged by the proletariat is the defeat of "its own" bourgeoisie, for which purpose, as Lenin pointed out, the proletariat must exploit the difficulties of the government and the bourgeoisie. This zealous pursuit of peace by the Kautskyists, the Austro-Marxists, the Longuetists, the British "Independent" Laborites, and by Trotskyism, represented, in effect, a blocking tactic against the impending civil war in which the working class in every country bade fair to "settle accounts with its own bourgeoisie". It represented the impediment of Centrism to the final break of the revolutionary forces with the social-chauvinist parties.

Since the World War, in the general crisis of capitalism, now that social-democracy has been degraded from opportunism to counter-revolution, Centrism has entered a new phase of its historic role. As the workers grow more militant, as their class consciousness increases, as they become in increasing numbers politically oriented in the direction of the Communist Party, social-democracy, now discredited, produces from itself a "Left" monstrosity. With revolutionary, almost-Communist, phrases, this "Left" one springs forward, hurling epithets at the camp on the Right, while blocking the path to the Left. This is a stratagem of leading the workers through a "Leftward" detour, back to the Right. This has been the historic role of Centrism throughout the post-War period.

Thus, in the first period after the World War, the period of

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post-War revolutions, when throughout the world the voice of the Third International met with response; when the proletarian rank and file of the German Independent Socialist Party, the French Socialist Party, the Independent Labor Party, the Socialist Party of America, were pressing towards Communism; when the war record of the major parties of the Second International had disgraced them in the eyes of the workers; when Kerenskyism had been shown up before the working class of the world; when Communist Parties, Socialist Party, the Independent Labor Party, the Socialist Party of Second International became obviously inadequate as the principal social mainstay of capitalism. It was then that capitalism consolidated its "Left" reserve line. It was then that the Vienna Union, the "Two-and-a-Half International", was thrust forward by the bourgeoisie to attract the Leftward-moving proletariat. The Two-and-a-Half International even went so far as to profess the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat; to wit, the Leipzig Congress of the German Independent Socialists, in December, 1919; to wit, in fact, Ramsay MacDonald who, along with other Centrist leaders, deemed it politic, seeing the Leftward advance of the masses, to declare himself for the dictatorship of the proletariat! The Centrists scolded the Second International, calling it the sole hindrance to the unity of the working class, and engaged generally in "revolutionary" grandiloquence.

But when the second post-War period set in, the interim of relative capitalist stabilization, these "Left" maneuverers withdrew their following into the camp of social-democracy. The Two-and-a-Halfers dropped the cumbersome fraction and merged with the Second International in May, 1923, at the Hamburg Conference, in a reunited, openly anti-Communist, International.

This is their role. They are the emergency squad of the social-democracy when capitalism is hardest pressed.

Allied with, and varieties of, this false "Leftism" are the renegade Lovestoneites, the counter-revolutionary "Fourth International" Trotskyites, and the National-Socialist Musteites. The purpose of all of these groupings is one and the same—to help save the social-fascist Second International and its ideology as the party of the main social support of capitalism among the workers.

This does not mean, of course, that the proletarian rank and file of the Socialist Party is to be identified with the "Left" demagogy of the social-fascist leadership. The basic proletarian sections of the membership are undergoing a process of genuine Left-radicalization. Their aspirations are for Socialism, for Communism. But insofar as they lend strength to the misleaders, insofar as they

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allow themselves to be deluded into believing that the Party which is the apparatus of social-fascism can serve as an instrument of revolution, they work counter to their own revolutionary strivings.

A chasm divides the "Left" social-democracy in the present period and Left-Wing Socialism prior to the formation of the Communist Parties. Left-Wing social-democracy of the pre-Comintern period was a courageous, revolutionary mass proletarian manifestation against the policy of opportunism and social-chauvinism of the Second International. True, it was still marked by vacillation and hesitancy. Trenchantly critical though it was of social-chauvinism, it was not yet able to trace with the clearness of the Russian Bolsheviks the treacherous role of social-democracy to the fundamental opportunism from which it proceeded. As a result, there lingered within Left-Wing Socialism opportunist concepts which set themselves up against Lenin's criticism, thus retarding the organizational break of the Left-Wing with the bankrupt Second International and slowing the tempo of its historic progress to Bolshevism. But essentially it was the Left Socialism that was destined to follow in the path of Lenin and the Russian Bolsheviks. It was the Socialism which had begun to see the imminence of the historic opportunity for attacking the foundations of the capitalist structure and to recognize the necessity for a break with the social-chauvinists. It was the Left Socialism moving toward Lenin, toward Communism.

Present-day "Left" social-democracy, on the contrary, is the extension of Centrism to the stage of "Left" social-fascism. It arises, not to attack, but to protect and salvage social-democracy as the main social support of the bourgeoisie. It stands in the way of the unification of social-democratic and Communist workers. It leads against Socialism, against Communism.

Today there is no Left Socialism outside the Communist Party, outside the Party of Lenin—the confluence into which the historic Left streams of social-democracy gathered. The Party whose program of action is to lead the American toilers toward the revolutionary way out, the Party which makes the fight for bread the fight against capitalism, the Party which, at its Eighth Convention, openly and unequivocally advanced as its central slogan, *Soviet Power!*—this is the Party that rightfully claims into its ranks the Leftward-striving rank and file in the Socialist Party; this is the Party that sets itself as the central task the unification of Socialist and Communist workers for winning the majority of the American working class for the revolution, for achieving a Soviet America!

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The Lessons of the Toledo Strike

By JOHN WILLIAMSON

THE seven-week strike of the Auto-Lite workers started in the early part of April and was a follow-up of several weeks of strike in the same plant early in February. The workers had been returned with a 5 per cent wage increase and promise of examination by one of the various Labor Boards, of all their grievances and the question of union recognition by April 1. The workers believed it but, once they were back in the shop, the employers and the government conveniently forgot the workers and their union. The second strike then took place, demanding a 10 per cent wage increase, senority rights, recognition of the union, time and a half for all work over 40 hours a week, and double time for Sundays.

For over five weeks the strike had no life and nearly 1,200 had returned to work, leaving over 600 still on strike. An injunction limited picketing to 25 men. Only with the application of the Communist policy of mass picketing and violation of the injunction, was the plant closed, and negotiations started. For ten days the Auto-Lite workers, with thousands of other Toledo workers helping them prepare daily for a general strike, battled against a united front of employers, government, arbitrators, police, deputies, A. F. of L. misleaders, and the National Guard. These ten days saw some heroic fighting by thousands of workers who besieged the plant for 24 hours. The bullets of the National Guard killed two workers. The mass continued its fight more energetically than ever against the armed forces, sometimes sweeping the Guard back from their positions. Symptomatic of the feeling of solidarity, of identical conditions in the other plants under the N.R.A., and of the whole political character of the strike, was the rapid spreading and popular support of the general strike which gained the backing of 83 local A. F. of L. unions.

Two different strategies were evident throughout the strike. One aimed to defeat the Auto-Lite strike and prevent the general strike by means of arbitration; sell-out; the "Red Scare"; the use

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of armed force and the slaughter of the workers; injunctions and jails; pressure from Roosevelt, Green, and Governor White; and "Left" phrasemongering and division of the workers by such leaders as Ramsey, Myers, etc., and the Musteite American Workers Party. This was the policy of the united front against the strikers and Toledo workers. On the other side, was the strategy of establishing the workers' right to strike and picket regardless of injunction, of closing down the plant by mass picketing, of the absolute rejection of arbitration and Labor Boards, and of support to the Auto-Lite strikers by all workers who should, at the same time, improve their own conditions by an immediate general strike. Throughout the entire situation, the Party played an active and effective role, handicapped as it was by its prior isolation from the Auto-Lite workers and the trade union movement generally. The general strike was scuttled by the A. F. of L. leaders, the spearhead and most effective instrument of the employers, through postponement, appeals to the President, enlisting the support of the church, demobilizing the picket lines at Auto-Lite, trying to bribe the electrical workers through big concessions right at the moment when the strike should occur, and ramming through a sell-out agreement on the Auto-Lite strikers. The weakness of the Party in the A. F. of L., its lack of a broad rank-and-file movement inside the A. F. of L., made it possible for the A. F. of L. misleaders to put this over—but not without a struggle, in the course of which the misleaders considerably exposed themselves, as a result of the mass agitation of the Communist Party and the Unemployment Council and the beginnings of militant opposition work. The general strike did not occur. Its threat and the ten-day mass fighting of the workers against the National Guard and deputies forced certain concessions for the electricians and other workers. The Auto-Lite workers got a sell-out agreement which would have meant wholesale discrimination, if not for the continued militancy of the rank and file against the Ramsey-Bossler leadership, which nearly resulted in renewing the entire struggle and was averted through some additional concessions to the strikers. Above all, the Toledo workers went through ten days of intensive political training in which the class lines were sharply drawn. The line up of Mininger, the Chamber of Commerce, Roosevelt, and the State government was clearly shown, as well as the treacherous role of the A. F. of L. officials. Contrasted with this was the mass experience of thousands of workers in strike strategy and fighting, the need of rank-and-file leadership in their unions, the possible great power of the general strike as an immediate weapon, and the clear class,

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fighting role of the Communist Party and the effectiveness of its policies.

CLASS STRUGGLES ON A NEW AND HIGHER PLANE IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. emphasized that because the capitalist world is in a period "closely approaching a new round of revolutions and wars", all phases of the class struggle will be on a much higher and more political level than ever before. Our Eighth National Convention further stressed:

> "The rising wave and sharpening character of the social struggles, arising on economic issues from the heroic effort of the masses to defend their standard of living, are developing more and more to a conscious struggle against capitalism . . . The magnitude of the struggles shows that the masses are accumulating enormous revolutionary energy and that big class battles are maturing." *

The Cleveland Party District Convention, applying the Party line, emphasized:

> "The main outlook everywhere, including the auto industry, if we work intensely enough, is for the immediate continuation of the strike wave. All of the conditions for it exist. The workers are not satisfied. Their central demand for wage increases to meet the increased cost of living has not been granted. We can look to a spreading of strike wave in metal, textile, some sections of steel, and possibly rubber. Special attention must be paid to the auto industry."

The Toledo events are a verification of the higher plane and more political character the class battles assume today. Here we saw pitched battles for six days, not only against the deputies and police, who used tear gas, police clubs, and other terroristic methods, but even against the superior military forces of the National Guard. Even while the workers were being killed, the masses did not break ranks. After every gas attack, the ranks reformed and new attacks with bare hands and bricks were made. During these days, there was no more talk of merely a picket line. On one side was the factory, all windows smashed and some machinery ruined as a result of the workers defense of their picket line, in the early days, against the attacks of deputies and police. Surrounding the plant for eight blocks was a "war zone" every inch guarded by the militia, with no one allowed within. Even many of the workers' houses within this prescribed area had to be vacated because no one

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* *The Way Out*—A Program for American Labor, pp. 37-38. Workers Library Publishers, 10 cents.

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could live in them because of the tear and vomiting gas, hanging everywhere. Outside were massed thousands of workers, shouting, singing, tearing up streets to get bricks to defend themselves. Every street-light was knocked out to keep the streets dark, with their own spontaneous guards keeping auto-lights out so as not to expose anybody. Everywhere the atmosphere was tense. All night long, the "boom" of tear gas bombs (no longer thrown but shot), mingled with shooting and with the sirens of police cars, fire trucks and ambulances.

While it is true that the fighting did not yet involve machine-gun shooting (although there were plenty in evidence), or heavier weapons, nevertheless, the whole lineup of workers against the capitalist State, and the methods of struggle in a hitherto typical middle-sized industrial city is very symptomatic. The quick development from isolated strike struggles to bloody mass battles involving the bulk of the working population, shop workers, unemployed, Negro, women, and quickly spreading to the general strike preparations, such as we have seen in Toledo, is something new in the situation. Is it any wonder that the Scripps-Howard business writer, John Love, states:

> "Right before our eyes, Toledo has turned herself into a laboratory for experiment in labor relations at high temperatures and pressures.
>
> "We see things going on there that we used to have to read about in European dispatches, etc."

The bourgeoisie further saw the implications of the general strike in Toledo, when the same writer said:

> "The general strike is not a weapon of business unionism but of revolutionary unionism . . . For such reasons, the A. F. of L. has always been against general strikes and doubtless always will be . . . A general strike is always for political purposes, never for industrial, and this is where American unions blunder when they trifle with it."

The local *News Bee* "knew their local A. F. of L. leaders" quite well when they wrote editorially:

> "We have an idea that the labor leaders have no stomach for a strike which would tie up the power of the city. It has too much the earmarks of the beginning of the threatened general strike. Certainly the responsible labor leaders are fully aware of the terrific consequences of a general strike and are becoming increasingly alert to some means of avoiding it."

The real point is that the Central Labor Union leaders were never in favor of a general strike Under mass pressure, they

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headed the movement in order to behead it. Aside from the fact that no preparations were made—no call to unions to vote on the question was ever issued, every move was to defeat it. The appeal to Roosevelt which said, "Your personal intervention is necessary to prevent a general strike"; the action of Myers, the secretary of the Committee of 23 to prepare the strike, who was the main instrument in forcing through an agreement on the electrical and power workers' unions, which took the heart out of the strike, and dozens of other examples, could be shown to prove the loyalty to American capitalism on the part of the A. F. of L. leaders, and their fear of all the implications of the general strike. The Toledo events further proved the correctness of our Party Convention analysis of the role of social-fascism (which includes the Musteites) when it stated:

> "Social-fascism in the United States, as throughout the world, assists finance capital in carrying through attacks against the masses, and in aiding them in the attempt to find a capitalist way out of the crisis, and serves as the main social support for the bourgeoisie in the maintenance of capitalist rule." *

The A. F. of L. leadership, especially the "Left" phrasemongers Ramsey and Myers, with Muste tailing along behind them, were the most dangerous enemy of the Toledo workers. At every move, it was this type who were pushed forward to try and counteract the effectiveness of the Communist slogans and activity and especially to put over the various sell-out measures.

Toledo displayed the solid capitalist front, which one can expect when the proletarian class front unites. Every employers' force, every capitalist political party and henchmen, the Rotary Clubs and their ilk, the Bishop of the Church, the Courts, the N.R.A., and the press, all showed one solid, unbroken front. Later in the struggle, when the Ex-Socialist Mayor Klotz tried to squirm out of his responsibility, having an eye to the future elections, Sheriff Krieger answered:

> "The fact of the matter is that the use of gas guns and grenades by police and deputy sheriffs at the Auto-Lite plant on that fateful Wednesday was part of a definite plan to drive back the rioters which had received the advance and unqualified approval of Mayor Klotz himself—Mayor Klotz personally gave his approval to this plan of using gas bombs and other methods of defense and offense at a conference of law enforcement heads that Wednesday morning in the office of Safety Director John Price . . . in the presence of all those who attended the conference, including Mr. Price, Chief of Police Dan Wolfe, Police Captain "Spike" Hennessy, Inspector

* *Ibid*, p. 38.

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Ray Allen, Chief Jailer Jay Gilday and two military observers—Brig. Gen. Conelly and Col. Fuhr. At this conference, I proposed a plan which included the arrest during the afternoon of radical leaders and agitators who were inciting the crowd to acts of violence."

Great use was made of a statement by Bishop Alter of the Catholic Church, because many of the strikers were Polish, and Catholic in their religion. One gem in this statement was:

"No matter what one may think about the calling of the troops, the fact is that they are here and that they represent lawfully constituted authority. To thwart them in the performance of their duty or to attack them in any way violates the law of God and the law of the land. Let no one condone such conduct . . . To my own people within the church, I solemnly declare such conduct is a grievous sin deserving the eternal reprobation. The quickest way to restore government to the civil authorities is to desist from every form of violence. For the rest let me urge my Catholic people and all my fellow citizens to stay out of the danger zone."

Lastly, we cannot overlook the fact that the Toledo events served as an X-Ray examination of our Party in that town. In confirmed 100 per cent that statement of the Open Letter which said:

"Never before was the situation in the country so favorable for the development of the Communist Party into a real revolutionary mass Party. But from this it follows also that failure of the Party to understand its chief task—namely; to become rooted in the decisive industrial centers, in the important big factories—never before represented such great danger for the fulfillment of our revolutionary tasks as a whole." (Page 10.)

Here we saw clearly the possibilities for leadership of these great masses, who took up our slogans and tried to apply them as best they could against all the capitalist forces, especially the social-fascist leaders, but we were not able successfully to lead the Toledo workers to an immediate victory, because our Party had not taken seriously the Party Open Letter, in which was emphasized:

"It is time that the entire Party should understand that without a solid basis among the decisive elements of the American workers, the Party cannot lead the revolutionary struggles of the working class and free them from the influence of the social democrats and the bourgeoisie, which still prevails among the decisive elements of the working class, however, favorable the conditions for our influence may be." (Page 11.)

WHAT WAS THE CENTRAL STRATEGICAL LINE OF THE PARTY?

To defeat the strategy of the bourgeoisie described at the beginning of this article, the Party's first task, even though it had no organizational contacts—not to speak of groups—with the strikers,

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was to give a line and involve its members in carrying out this line, to develop mass picketing at the Auto-Lite, regardless of all injunctions, to close down the plant, and in this way, force direct negotiations. In a weak, spasmodic, and by no means fully mobilized manner, the Party through its influence within the Unemployment Council tried to initiate a united front support of the strike. It brought down 100-200 workers from time to time to the picket line and tried to fraternize with the union pickets. It issued many leaflets, held meetings, etc. Only after several weeks of such work, during which time the tactics of the A. F. of L. had allowed the plant to continue operating, 1,200 of the workers had returned to work, the injunctions were being strictly adhered to, and Ramsey and Company were calling the workers mobilized under the Unemployment Council and Communist Party leadership "Communist outsiders" etc.,—only then were the slogans of the Communist Party finally understood and transformed into action by the masses. Under these new circumstances, the main line of the Party, was:

1. To avoid arbitration or referring to N.R.A. labor boards for settlement while the plant reopens and the fight for direct negotiations with mass action to be continued till satisfactory settlement is reached.

2. To show clearly to the workers the connection of the local oppressors—Mr. Mininger of the Auto-Lite and Sheriff Krieger, against whom they were incensed, with the Roosevelt National Government, whose policy their local satellites were carrying out.

3. To develop the broadest mass united front of all toiling population to support strikes. No let-up in mass picketing and developing all forms of mass protest demonstrations and support, including efforts to transform the funeral of the workers shot into a mass protest funeral.

4. To try to influence the National Guard, through leaflets and personal talks, simultaneously with mass resentment to refuse to shoot the workers.

5. To initiate an immediate general strike, not allowing the leaders to play around with this talk any longer.

6. To undermine and expose the betraying policy of the A. F. of L. leadership and particularly to out-maneuver the splitting tactics which the Musteites (A.W.P.) were trying to initiate.

7. To bring forward the Party boldly, trying to involve all members actively in these events, and building the influence, prestige, press and Party organizations among the strikers and union shop workers.

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All organizational measures planned and carried through fitted into this main strategical line.

THE NECESSARY ROLE OF THE PARTY IN STRIKE STRUGGLES

Many strike struggles have already shown to us that Communists are not an absolute prerequisite to the calling of strikes. The workers themselves, under pressure of conditions, will strike and have struck. We must emphasize, and Toledo has underlined this point, that the extent to which the Party is rooted and has influence among the workers is decisive in the proper conduct and settling of the strike. We see in Toledo that despite our isolation from the Auto-Lite workers, the strike occurred, called by the workers over the heads of the leaders. While it is true that our ideas were taken hold of by the masses, the absence of a broad rank-and-file group and a functioning Party fraction, made it impossible to counter and expose in time every move of the bosses and A. F. of L. leaders. This was especially true of the tactical moves of the misleaders inside the unions. We not only could not quickly and effectively enough expose their maneuver, but, equally important, we didn't have an instrument to carry through our class struggle policy. Only in the last days of the strike were there the beginnings of a rank-and-file group which has now grown to over 20. Our being outside the union, made it easier for the fakers to refer demagogically to us as "outsiders".

The outcome could have been completely different if the Party had strong roots and organizational influence on a class program in some key shop and at least 15 A. F. of L. locals. Here we saw clearly the importance of work inside the A. F. of L. as well as building of the T.U.U.L. unions in such unorganized plants as Chevrolet. A previous policy of concentration carried out would have given us a lever to operate with.

Despite all our weaknesses, the masses saw several things clearly about the Communists. Once the Communist policy was applied and Communists united with the masses, the Auto-Lite plant was closed. For weeks, with A. F. of L. tactics, it remained open and their strike was being strangled. Furthermore, the slogan of "Immediate General Strike" gained great support and only our organizational weakness inside the A. F. of L. defeated the successful carrying into action of this correct slogan.

It was also a great lesson to see how masses can be swung at strategic moments, with correct slogans, which have their roots in the masses, plus a minimum of organization. The importance of simple but effective action slogans like "Immediate General

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Strike", "Mass Picketing will close the plant!" "No Aribtration", became clear. It should also be clear that as we go into such type of mass actions more and more, there arises the real lesson of building a sound union corps or cadre, which, if sound in understanding of the class struggle policy of the T.U.U.L. unionism, can be an effective factor in swinging the masses and also in recruiting them en masse during such events.

Toledo also showed, if we work correctly in these battles on a higher plane, how to defeat the "Red Scare". The bourgeoisie made every effort to isolate the Communists. The press carried stories about "Communists planning to dynamite the plant", of "hundreds of Communists swarming into Toledo", etc. On May 23, Adj. Gen. Henderson of Ohio, said among other things, "Mr. Ramsey said that violence was not caused by the union but by radicals that have inserted themselves into the strike". Governor White five days later tried his hand at the same line, saying:

> "I am convinced that had the dispute, from which has arisen the recent violence, been confined to the former employees of the company now on strike, no State action would have been necessary. However, persons who hold the law in utter disregard and who have not the interests of America at heart have seized upon the local labor troubles as a pretext to further their own propaganda and violent intentions. With this element, I will not compromise and shall differentiate between it and bonafide workmen in labor disputes."

Again, on Decoration Day, the Assistant Attorney General, a military major, called upon the veterans to "put their heel down hard on the slimy neck of Communism and twist and turn it until every vestige of life is out of the viper", in connection with what he claimed was the Communist responsibility for the Toledo events.

None of these efforts succeeded. The Communists had established through their personal participation in the picket line and mass battles as well as through consistently speaking to and answering every argument, through leaflets, mass picketing, and regular sales of the *Daily Worker,* that they were on the workers' side. Every worker knew and felt this. The attempts to keep us off the picket line, out of the parade, from speaking at the mass demonstration all failed because the Party had functioned openly and stated its position clearly in words and deeds from the first day of the strike.

PROBLEM OF THE NATIONAL GUARD

We see clearly the growing use of the National Guard in strike conflicts because of their militant and mass character. All the companies called to Toledo, were from small towns, primarily,

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farming in character. A roster of the towns show Fremont, Findlay, Oak Harbor, Napoleon, Kenton, Lima, St. Mary's, Paulding, Spencerville and Ada. In not a single one of these is there a Party unit or any class struggle organization. The Cleveland papers explained the policy of not mobilizing the Toledo National Guard in one edition, quickly withdrawn, as follows:

> "The local National Guard were not mobilized because military authorities and local authorities thought it inadvisable to ask soldiers to charge their own townsmen."

There is need of a thoroughgoing analysis of the entire subject of our tactics in such situations, since our experiences are very limited. It must be clear that the belligerent and effective methods of struggle against the National Guard by the masses, was a positive feature and should not be deprecated, as some have a tendency to do, posing against it the question of fraternization. There must be a double process of breaking down the morale of the National Guard by mass resistance and offensive action, at the same time, an internal propaganda of fraternization and "refusal to shoot" carried on. Governor White in his address to the troops praising them, is a witness to some of the results of the battles, when he says:

> "In one company alone every man was injured by missiles, and two officers beaten into unconsciousness."

One grave weakness was insufficient work among the National Guard. Only one leaflet was gotten out and very little personal work done.

Another problem is that of how the masses can overwhelm and outmaneuver even the armed forces of the National Guard. The National Guard issued mimeographed directives to their lower ranks on every maneuver. One of these, headed "Raiding Patrol—Riot Duty" and signed "Corrected Copy—Destroy all other copies", contained detailed directives for seizing, in the course of the mass struggles, the "riot leaders", and seizing them from the mass whom they expect to surround and protect their leaders. Careful study and exposures must be made known as to the possibility of overwhelming such amateurish troops by masses of unarmed workers.

It is also necessary to exploit to the full, the local contradiction and jealousies in connection with bringing in of "outside troops" which, for the moment, serve as a sort of "army of occupation".

Lastly, it raises sharply the broader question of increased Party work in the small semi-agrarian towns, such as those from which the National Guard troops came.

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WEAKNESSES AND MISTAKES OF THE PARTY

In such a situation, particularly where the Party was so weak, and not adequately prepared, there are many weaknesses which under different circumstances could be repaired, that stand out glaringly. These must be differentiated from mistakes committed in the course of the struggle itself. The main weaknesses reflected primarily the isolated position of the Party, its complete isolation from the shops, especially the A. F. of L. unions, no outlook of mass politics, developing mass struggles and rooting ourselves among the decisive masses, as the Open Letter had explained and demanded. But this isolation also reflected itself in the work of the Unemployment Councils which are not the broad non-Party mass organizations they easily could be. Due to the fact that the District forces are weak and limited, and Toledo was not a concentration Section, little direct attention was given it, until a few weeks prior to these mass events when the District Organizational Instructor went in and organizational changes in the leadership of the Section were carried through. During the course of the events, the District sent the District Organizer and several other leading comrades, who spent most of the time right on the spot to work with the local comrades.

The specific mistakes committed can be summarized as follows:

1. Neglecting the first group of 34 contacts we got from Auto-Lite strikers in the early days of the strike. This cost us dearly and we had to start from the bottom to rebuild everything. The lack of understanding, and of political foresight to see the key role such a group could have played, only reflects neglect of A. F. of L. opposition work and no appreciation of the development of the strike situation.

2. Insufficient boldness on the part of all of us, including the District center, in bringing forward boldly the general strike slogan. Our first formulation called for a sympathy strike. In this connection, the A. F. of L. leaders for their own betraying purposes, were much more sensitive to the moods of the masses than we, because while we talked "sympathy strike" the A. F. of L. leaders were giving lip service to general strike and heading this sentiment by creating the Committee of 23 in order to mislead it later.

3. The method of initiating the United Front conference by a narrow committee with no representative group of union or shop workers involved and giving it the pretentious name of "Provisional Committee for a General Strike". Connected with this was the error of listing all organizations to which the call was addressed, but omitting the names of the Party, Unemployment Council,

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International Workers Order, etc. The mistake occured on the one day the District Organizer absented himself to cover another meeting which it is now plain should have been sacrificed as others were later. This mistake was corrected to the best of our ability as described in the *Daily Worker*.

4. Absolutely no attention to making contacts, however difficult or few they may have been, in the Electrical Workers Union, which was to play such a key role in the later developments. As it was, we didn't have even a single contact inside this local.

5. Tending on one occasion to make the Party substitute for the economic mass organizations which had to be the organizational instrument in welding the broadest possible united front, without in any way denying the leading and open political role of the Party.

We must state that the local Party leadership and a considerable part of the membership, once they were mobilized, worked with unceasing effort. We had occasions, however, when some unit organizers, at the height of the strike, "went fishing" or some equally ridiculous thing. Such elements obviously did not understand the great significance of events in their own city and must be replaced by serious minded Communists.

ROLE OF "LEFT" PHRASEMONGERS AND MUSTEITES

The most dangerous role was played by those who, under the mass pressure, used "Left" words, but whose deeds were the most vicious because, behind the words, were the worst deeds of betrayal, as the splitting of workers' ranks and the creating of confusion. The main figure in such a group was Thomas Ramsey, business agent of the Automotive Federal Workers Union. This same Ramsey, last February, was the main instrument in sending the men, at these plants and the Spicer Co., back to work, accompanied by great praise of the N.R.A. and the Roosevelt government. In April, it was he, who, while talking radical, insisted upon strict compliance with the injunction order; who pointed out Communists that were on the picket line to the police; who, in the first days of the mass fighting, said it was "Communist outsiders" who were responsible. As soon at the workers began to fight successfully by following the slogans of the Communists, this same Ramsey, to maintain his leadership, was more careful in his speeches. It was no longer safe to denounce indiscriminately the Communists, so he began making more radical speeches, even trying to take credit for the mass picketing. He greeted assistance from other organizations. He "rejected" (knowing the mood of the strikers) the first formulated sell-out agreements, but at the same time, when he went to see the Governor

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and was asked if he had anything to say, answered, "nothing at all to say. The Governor has said everything". He surely had said a lot by sending in the National Guard to shoot and kill the strikers. Since he was surrounded by this halo of radical talk, it was difficult for many workers to see his real role. It was he who finally put over the settlement, which under such circumstances was a sellout. But even then, when the workers rebelled against such a sellout, he continued his "Left" phraseology and treacherous deeds. As the workers saw through the hollow victory of Ramsey, which really was a Mininger victory, they were ready to re-establish a mass picket line and close down the plant again. Ramsey, dealing with this phase of events after the sellout was put over, states in the *Toledo Union Leader*:

> "I called Mr. Taft on the phone and informed him that the workers were becoming extremely impatient and that I could no longer hold them in check . . . Demands were immediately made from the floor that we start at once to picket the plant. They were persuaded however, after considerable discussion to wait till Wednesday . . . This precipitated another crisis and we found it extremely difficult to avert real trouble."

It was under such pressure that the "Left" betrayer, Ramsey, tried to raise his stocks at these very moments that he himself describes, by making an announcement, at the union meeting, of Comrade Browder's mass meeting.

Another, who must be sharply exposed, is Oliver Myers, business agent of the Electrical and Power Workers Union. An ex-Socialist and radical phrasemonger, he was elected as secretary of the Committee of 23 to prepare the general strike. At the crucial moment, it was he who used every trick known to him, first to try and put over a proposal to accept a 10 per cent wage increase on condition that the power men don't go on strike, and finally succeeded in forcing, by a majority vote, a proposal to accept a 20 per cent wage increase without mentioning the general strike, but the next day added a clause to that effect.

Into this situation the Musteite national leadership moved. Their purpose was to try, through radical speeches, to (1) get a mass base for their nationalistic American Workers Party, (2) smuggle into the Toledo labor movement by uniting with Ramsey and Co., (3) create confusion among the masses of workers who were transforming the Communist slogans into action, by posing as "just as good Communists, but more realistic and with no domination from Moscow", (4) give objective support to the Ramsey, Bossler, Myers crowd, by uttering not one word of criticism, while issuing a leaflet

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which stated, "The A.W.P. is against disruption and dual unionism. We believe in genuine unity . . . We support the A. F. of L. unions, though we criticize false leaders and policies". Since not a word of criticism of leaders was made, the conclusion was very clear—support the leaders.

In line with this policy, the Ohio Unemployed League refused a United Front offer of the Unemployment Councils for a protest demonstration after the shooting of the two workers by the National Guard. Budenz theatrically got arrested on the picket line and then tried to use the court room as a national forum. We did not know at the time, that the arrests had also another "show angle", reeking with mercenary adventurism, as was exposed by the publication in the *Daily Worker* of Budenz' wire, which stated concerning Cope, "when is he going to get arrested so that we can raise some money on his efforts".

On the night of the mass demonstration when the workers booed the A. F. of L. leaders off the platform, and the Communist slogans were shouted widespread, a local Musteite, through a mistake committed unknowingly by a delegate from Detroit, became chairman, after the A. F. of L. leaders could no longer face the crowd. They were on hand to try and mislead the masses and "save" them for the Ramseys. However, no Musteite chairman could keep the leaders of the Communist Party, Unemployment Councils and International Labor Defense from the platform, and the line and slogans of the Communists had to be repeated by the Musteite speakers or else they feared the same thing as the A. F. of L. leaders.

While they made little actual organizational inroads into the situation, they did get a lot of publicity, especially national in character, through the court room episode, assisted by Arthur Garfield Hays. They also created much confusion in the ranks of the workers. The Musteites are a danger who must be exposed sharply before the masses and the most thorough-going political explanation given to the Party and revolutionary-minded workers under Party influence. Their maneuvers to root themselves inside the A. F. of L., to build a mass unemployment movement, and to establish a base in the coming elections for the American Workers Party must be frustrated.

MAIN TASKS BEFORE THE TOLEDO PARTY

The Party in Toledo entered this recent struggle without any real preparations, because it had not been politically mobilized around the analysis of the Open Letter, or the further concretization in the

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District Convention Resolution, and its work and activity orientated accordingly.

The situation today is most favorable for fulfilling the central and control tasks of the Party District Convention. The Party must initiate and head every struggle of the workers, employed and unemployed. It must utilize the experiences of the last few weeks to carry through a withering exposure of the A. F. of L. leadership and social-fascism generally. Above all, the Party must make a sharp break with its sectarian isolation of the past and every member must carry through responsibilities. A thorough-going mobilization of the Party membership, to avoid any tendency of settling back into the old groove, must immediately be carried through, and any social-democrats inside the Party who resist this and become obstacles in the path of a forward-sweeping movement must be swept aside and out of the Party.

The specific tasks of the Party must include:

1. Organized effort to win influence and build organization amongst the factory and union workers through a serious organizational drive to build the Auto Workers Union in the unorganized Chevrolet plant; by building a broad rank-and-file movement inside at least 15 selected key local A. F. of L. unions; by building shop committees of workers or preliminary department groups in the many unorganized shops. Along with this must go popularizing of H.R.7598 and organizing of a broad Conference of A. F. of L. unions to support this bill.

2. Immediate steps to rebuild a broad mass Unemployment Council. The Unemployment Council has a good name amongst the workers because of its past leadership. It has further popularized itself through its active participation in the strike. All this alone will not build a mass Unemployment Council. It can be of tremendous help, but only the development of a mass movement of struggle based upon the burning issues confronting the unemployed will *build* such an Unemployment Council, which will then have the support of the employed workers.

3. Immediate entry into the election campaign as a part of all other activities, through a local ticket as well as the State and Congressional tickets. With proper organization and conduct of the campaign, the Party can sink deep roots among the masses, and really undertake a serious election campaign to *elect Communists.*

4. The response of the workers to the *Daily Worker* must be followed up by the establishment of a broad apparatus which will even go beyond the confines of the units. At every factory, at every union hall and on every important street corner, the *Daily*

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Worker can and must be sold. This must be done *daily*, and not as a haphazard affair. Supplementing this must go a broad campaign to sell Communist literature.

5. In the course of all this work, serious efforts to increase the Party membership, not by ten or 20, but by thinking in terms of hundreds. Especially should this recruiting be directed among the shop and union members, with several shop nuclei built in the course of the campaign. It must become a matter of Communist pride that within the next month there will be established a Party and a Y. C. L. shop nucleus with a Party shop paper in the Auto-Lite plant.

All this can and must be done. We must not depend only on the few Communists we have today. Throw into this work the workers newly recruited into the Party. All the old habits, practices, and sectarian isolation of the Toledo Party must be thrown overboard. We must see that we are surrounded with an army of workers who know how to do things, who are anxious, and have proven in deeds that they are militant fighters, and are beginning to understand the line of the Communist Party. The spirit of the strikes and mass struggles in Toledo of the last weeks must imbue and inspire every Communist to carry through such Party work as will make us a greater factor in the coming struggles of Toledo workers who are now maturing. Forward, Party Comrades!

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Unify the Forces of All Steel Workers for Aggresive Unionism!

(*Statement of the Central Committee, Communist Party of U.S.A.*)

TO ALL STEEL WORKERS:

Fellow Workers and Comrades:

President Green of the American Federation of Labor, Mike Tighe, head of the Amalgamated Association, the Committee of Ten and a number of N.R.A. "conciliators", were able to get the A.A. special Convention of June 14 to reverse the decisions of the April regular Convention, and to call off the strike. Green in Pittsburgh represented President Roosevelt. Behind him was the full power of the Roosevelt Administration and N.R.A.

At the same time President Roosevelt jammed through Congress in the closing session his anti-strike, compulsory arbitration and company union bill. All the high officials of the A. F. of L. and of the A.A., including the Committee of Ten, approved these anti-union, strike-breaking and anti-working class measures.

President Green stated falsely that he was acting in the interests of the steel workers. He said that he was sure the time was coming when the steel workers' wrongs would be righted but that the time was not here yet. He said that the time had not yet come to strike. The A.A. officials and the Committee of Ten took the same stand. President Roosevelt also claims that he had this law passed in the interests of the toiling workers. With so many prominent government politicians and "labor" people working in the interests of the steel workers, they, the steel workers, have a right to be suspicious. As far as these "friends" are concerned, the time to right the wrongs of the steel workers never comes.

FALSE FRIENDS

Who are these friends? How do they "help" the steel workers?

What are the issues involved in the struggles of the steel workers that have been hampered by the surrender of these official labor leaders, but which must and will continue until victory rests with the workers?

Steel workers getting low wages, discouraged by mass unemployment, working and living under the tyranny of company towns and

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company unions, had decided that the time for action had come. The delegates to the regular convention, expressing the sentiment of the rank and file of the A.A., especially the sentiments of the newly organized steel workers, voted to present a program of demands to the steel companies—and to strike if these demands were not granted.

The demands worked out by the steel workers called for a six-hour day and a five-day week, for a minimum wage and $1 per hour, for union recognition, for no discrimination against Negroes, for abolition of the speed-up, for passage of the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill—H.R. 7598, now before Congress.

The strike date was set for the middle of June if these demands were refused. The Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union, acting in the interests of a united struggle against the steel barons, endorsed these demands and called for solidarity of all steel and metal workers in support of them. The great majority of the steel workers throughout the country supported these demands and were ready for action. The American Iron and Steel Institute, the High Command of the steel barons, did not even consider the demands of the steel workers. They fortified the mills, converted them into military barracks, and their warehouses into arsenals for arms and ammunition. They recruited their private armies of gangsters from the underworld of Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit and New York. They prepared for civil war against the workers and their organizations.

They said that they would not deal with the unions in any shape, form or manner. They proclaimed the open shop and the company union policy again. They took "strike votes" of their employees—an unheard of procedure. They filled the press with statements that the steel workers had no grievances. They pointed to the fact that the A.A. officials had presented no demands except recognition of the union. They said that any grievances arising would be taken up only through the company unions. They said that the steel workers were completely satisfied with the present conditions. All of these actions and utterances of the steel barons and their American Iron and Steel Institute proceeded with the full knowledge and consent of the Roosevelt Administration and its N.R.A. labor boards.

ROOSEVELT—BOSSES' AIDE

The Roosevelt Government and the N.R.A. had already given great help to the steel bosses. Roosevelt had signed the new steel code. In every part of the administration of the steel code, practi-

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cally unlimited powers are given to the Board of Directors of the Iron and Steel Institute. It has the authority of policemen, prosecuting attorneys, judges and juries, as well as legislative powers. All together, the code gives the Institute absolute domination over all concerns in the steel industry and over buyers of steel, transportation agencies and the lives and destinies of the working class in entire communities. The position of company unions, into which the steel companies had been allowed by N.R.A. to force some 85 per cent of their employees, was strengthened by the code against genuine unions.

Then President Roosevelt and the N.R.A. again came to the aid of the lords of coal, iron and steel. General Johnson attacked the steel workers and their elected representatives in a manner that Hitler would envy. The Roosevelt Administration helped the steel barons conspire for a committee of three as proposed by the Iron and Steel Institute. The steel bosses proposed terms which included the provision that company unions should be the only organizations recognized as representing steel workers.

The steel bosses, General Johnson and the Roosevelt Administration could point to these fascist company unions as having the support of the steel workers in the same way as Hitler can point to the support of workers for the "unions" he and his storm troopers have set up, in the interests of monopoly capital. The "support" of these unions by workers is support under the muzzles of guns in the hands of hired thugs—support at the point of bayonets—support under the threat of being fired and blacklisted!

ROOSEVELT AND TIGHE "OPPOSITION" AGREE

The proposals of the steel barons, the proposals of the Roosevelt Government, the proposals of Green and Tighe, accepted by the Committee of Ten, were in essence the same.

Mike Tighe, head of the A.A., has betrayed every strike and struggle of the steel workers since 1919. He was against the strike from the very beginning. He was ready from the very beginning to accept the terms of the steel bosses. When he said that he "would go along" with the decisions of the rank and file delegates, it was only for the purpose of keeping contact with the workers for the final betrayal. Mike Tighe later came out openly for the program of surrender.

How did President Green "help" the steel workers? He remained silent during the whole time since the April Convention, except when he came out with a statement in the press agreeing to company unions "if the workers wanted them". Green, by his silence

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and by this statement, helped the bosses. But this does not close the record of the "help" of Green who voted for the Roosevelt open shop steel code!

These same leaders voted for the Automobile Code with its infamous "merit" clause legalizing the open shop and company unions. Green helped actively to put over the auto "settlement". These same A. F. of L. leaders are serving on all the strike-strangling N.R.A. code boards. If Green and his fellow officials really intended to strengthen unionism in the steel industry, they would have been out in the field speaking, organizing, and training leaders from the rank and file. If they really wanted to help the steel workers they would have been preparing them for the fight against the most powerful trust in the United States. If they really wanted to help the steel workers and not the steel barons, they would have called upon the railway workers to support the strike of the steel workers, to haul no iron, coal or limestone. They would have called on the coal miners to support the steel workers—to dig no coal for the steel company.

The A. F. of L. leaders are not organizing the workers to fight for better conditions. These leaders are the servants of the bosses. The only things they organize are defeats for the steel workers and other sections of the working class.

Large numbers of steel workers had no faith in Mike Tighe's leadership. They did not expect Green and Tighe to be on their side. There is a growing suspicion that Roosevelt is against the steel workers. But there was a belief in the good faith of the Committee of Ten elected by the regular convention to watch Tighe and prevent his playing with the steel bosses, because the members of the Committee of Ten claimed to be opposed to Mike Tighe and his policy of surrender.

MANUEVERS OF COMMITTEE OF TEN

What did this committee do? First, they themselves played directly into the hands of the steel barons by limiting the demands only to union recognition. Secondly, they joined with Mike Tighe and refused to unite with the Steel and Metal Workers' Industrial Union for action. They joined Tighe and the steel barons in slandering the Communists. Third, they wasted valuable time in Washington running from one government official to another, instead of being in the field organizing for the strike. Fourth, they outdid even Green and Tighe in an effort to make steel workers believe that President Roosevelt would help them.

The Committee of Ten climaxed their disgraceful surrender by

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swallowing, hook, line and sinker, the surrender policy of Green. They committed political suicide—then they voted in the convention for their own burial in unmarked graves, in the Potters Field of the class struggle.

Why do the steel bosses attack the Communist Party? Why is the government always arresting and imprisoning Communists? Why do the high-salaried A. F. of L. officials follow the example of the lords of iron, steel and coal and their government in attacking the Communist Party? Who are these Communists? What was the position of the Communist Party in regard to united action to force through the steel workers' demands?

The Communist Party gave every possible kind of support for the organization of the steel workers and the preparations of the strike for their demands. Every member of the Communist Party, whether a member of the A.A. (there are many Communists who belong to the A.A.) or the S.M.W.I.U., was working actively in the organization of the steel workers. The Communist Party did everything possible to unite the steel workers, to strengthen their position in the decisive fight against company unions, for recognition of genuine workers' unions.

The reason is plain why the bosses and their hangers-on attack the Communist Party. It is because the Communist Party wages continual struggle in the interests of the workers. The Communist Party denies that the interests of the steel workers and the steel barons are the same. Certainly workers know that the interests of the multi-millionaires—Mellon, Taylor, Weir, Grace, etc., are not the same as those of steel workers living and toiling just a jump ahead of hunger if employed and at the hunger level when jobless.

LOOK AT THE RECORD

What is the position of the people like Green and Tighe, who attack the Communist Party and at the same time claim that the interests of the steel workers and steel barons are the same? Look at the record of these gentry in textile, steel, coal, auto, etc. Look at their long record of sell-out and surrender of the interests of the workers, and then you will see why they attack the Communists, who expose them and try to free the labor movement from their destructive influence and splitting tactics. These ten and twenty-thousand-dollar a year "labor leaders" are against the interests of the workers, because they are in favor of the capitalist system. They are agents of the bosses who benefit from this robber system.

The class enemies of workers claim that Communists are not in

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favor of better conditions for the workers. They say that if workers got better wages and conditions they will not want to overthrow capitalism. This is false. Communists work and fight to wring the greatest possible improvement in wages and working conditions *now*. The Communists know that in the struggle for and the winning of better wages and conditions the labor movement and the whole working class trains itself for the struggle to end the capitalist system that is based on the robbery of workers.

Class enemies of workers "indict" Communists for believing in, and working for, the overthrow of capitalism and its robbery and oppression of workers. Communists proudly plead guilty to this indictment.

Those who wish to save the capitalist society, like the high-salaried officials of the A. F. of L., and its permanent mass unemployment and criminally low wages for workers, are opposed to higher wages and unemployment insurance paid for by the employers and the government, because these measures will cut into the profits of the capitalists and in this way "delay recovery". It is clear that these people mean recovery of profits which are made only out of workers. It is for this reason that the A. F. of L. officials are trying to stop by every means the fight for higher wages and better working conditions.

The Communists say that if higher wages for workers will wreck the capitalist robber system, then workers must fight all the harder to improve wages and working conditions. If victorious struggle for higher wages destroys capitalism, it simply proves again that the capitalist system is based on the robbery of the working class and is against their interests.

Communists are fighting for a better world, for the steel workers and the rest of the working class right now—and in the future—a world which exists not only in dreams, but a world which exists today in one-sixth of the whole world—the Soviet Union. The kind of a world Communists fight for today and every day, is a world where there will be no unemployment, for a world where workers own all, for a world where the rule of the workers prepares the way for the classless society of Communism. There is no other way for workers out of the crisis and mass misery created by capitalism than the Communist way—the revolutionary way. The only other choice is surrender, submission and shameful slavery. Communists are the most sensible, the best and most reliable fighters for the immediate bettering of wages and working conditions, for the building of unions—the basic defensive and offensive combatting

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batallions of the working class—powerful enough to force through recognition and put their demands into force.

The steel trust, Roosevelt Administration has used and is using Green and Tighe to discredit not only the A.A. among the steel workers in favor of company unions, but to discredit the very idea of unions controlled by workers themselves.

Many steel workers still think that President Roosevelt and his New Deal are working in their interests. Many steel workers realize that Green, Tighe and General Johnson are not on their side. Roosevelt still keeps some prestige. He has been able by clever politics to keep the pretense of friendship for workers.

What interests does Roosevelt represent? Whose government is this? If we ask the steel workers of Aliquipa who rules that fortified steel town, they would say that it was the J. & L. Steel Company. The workers of Homestead know that Carnegie Steel, a child of U. S. Steel, runs the town. They know that Burgess Cavanaugh is the servant of Carnegie Steel.

Communists know and say that the Roosevelt Government is the government of the steel corporations, the auto companies, the big bankers and trusts. It is the government of the very biggest and most powerful capitalists.

Some workers say that this was true of Hoover, but not of Roosevelt. But there has not been any change in the government in the U. S. It remains as it was under Hoover—a government run by an executive committee of the capitalists. Congress is composed of the representatives of the capitalist class parties as it was under Hoover. The very biggest captalist concerns have been helped by Roosevelt and N.R.A. financially (R.F.C. loans), morally and in the strengthening of company unions far more skillfully and on a wider scale than even Hoover dared to attempt.

N.R.A. BROUGHT FURTHER SLAVERY

What does the New Deal mean for workers? What has Section 7A meant for workers? N.R.A. has brought hundreds of millions of dollars in more profits to monopoly capital than it was ever able to get under Hoover. Clause 7A has meant the most rapid growth of company unionism ever seen in the United States, or any other country, for that matter. It has meant armed attacks on, and the killing of workers fighting for the right to organize. Never in the history of the United States has there been such widespread and continuous use of force against the working class and its organizations.

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THE BLUE EAGLE CASUALTY LIST

Take a look at the list of killed and wounded, clubbed, gassed and jailed workers in Minneapolis, Toledo, San Francisco, in Southern California, in Alabama, in Ambridge, in Weirton, in Cleveland, in New York, in the industrial districts of New Jersey, in Massachusetts—in practically every State and big industrial center in the country.

These brutal attacks are made on workers' demanding the right to organize, asking for more food, for higher living conditions.

It makes no difference whether the State Government is Progressive Republican, as in Pennsylvania under Governor Pinchot, or Democratic, as in Illinois, Ohio, and Alabama, whether Farmer-Laborite, as in Minnesota, or Socialist, as in Milwaukee—workers fighting for basic rights are arrested, killed, jailed and beaten.

The South, that stronghold of the Roosevelt Administration, stands out pre-eminently as the scene of organized lynching of Negro workers and organized murder terror against Negro workers, sharecroppers and poor farmers. This is capitalist government in America. It is the government of the American capitalist class that commits the organized and ceaseless outrages against workers and exploited farmers, Negro and white, foreign and native born, men, women and children.

In Soviet Russia, there is also class government. But it is the government of the working class representing all toilers, who make up the overwhelming majority of the people, compared to the little handful of representatives of big trust capitalists who rule this country.

From this standpoint we can see clearly how the steel workers' movement for organization and strike to enforce their demands was strangled by the Roosevelt Administration and betrayed by the A. F. of L. and A.A. leaders working in the interests of the steel barons. From this standpoint we can see clearly the disgraceful and cowardly character of the retreat and betrayal of their trust by the Committee of Ten.

Communists call upon steel workers to unite their ranks in every mill and plant regardless of union affiliation. We call upon them to organize committees of action and strike committees to strengthen their unions and prepare a mass strike movement to enforce their demands.

RANK-AND-FILE LEADERSHIP OF A.A.

The Communist Party urges all A.A. members to denounce the action of Green and Tighe and the Committee of Ten; the Com-

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munist Party urges the A.A. members to elect as officers of the local unions only those who have proven their courage and their will to fight for the interests of their brothers.

The Communist Party urges the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union to take the lead in organizing steel workers, especially in the biggest and most decisive plants and mills, to develop the united front throughout the steel industry and on this foundation stimulate and extend the struggles of steel workers.

Steel Workers: Organize in every mill, in every steel town. Defeat and oust the false leaders who betrayed you. United for struggle, refuse to accept the Green-Roosevelt plan, the plan that is the scheme of the Steel Institute and General Johnson, sugar-coated, so that you will swallow it without tasting is poison!

Steel Workers: Your place is in the only Party that fights for your interests, the only Party of the working class of which you are a powerful section. Join the Communist Party. Organize and win your demands!

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The Great West Coast Maritime Strike

By SAM DARCY

NOTE: *At this writing we are yet in midstream, so to speak, in the West Coast maritime strike. Our chief concern is to get to the other bank. This is therefore, not altogether a good moment in which to stop to write how far we have gotten. Subsequent developments may throw new light on what we think has already happened. This is especially so since the strike area extends for 1,900 miles and our information from the minor ports is not complete in all details. Writing these notes now, however, has its compensations: in the critical examination of the development of the strike, increasing discussion will help strengthen revolutionary activity amongst the workers in this strike as well as in other class battles.*

IT IS commonly agreed on the West Coast that the present militant strike is the largest ever conducted in the maritime industry, and the best organized and disciplined up to this moment in any industry in the history of the West. There are, at this writing, about 35,000 workers involved. The main center, in the San Francisco Bay area, includes 14,000 workers.

Participating directly in the strike are all longshore and seamen crafts and scalers, and indirectly, it includes sympathetic action by teamsters, machinists, boiler-makers, ship-yard workers and other minor crafts.

In order more easily to study the development of this movement, we are dividing our subject into four main headings:

1. Problems in developing the movement for struggle.
2. Problems in the calling of the strike.
3. Problems in the conduct of the strike.
4. Perspectives for the outcome of the strike.

PROBLEMS IN DEVELOPING THE MOVEMENT FOR STRUGGLE

For about a decade, with but minor exceptions, San Francisco longshoremen have been operating under a "Blue Book Union". This is a company union operated by the shipowners which has all of the characteristic evils of every other company union in the

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country. Yet it had been recognized by the Central Labor Council.

At the end of 1932, at the initiative of the militant elements on the waterfront, agitation for the organization of a real workers' union began. This agitation centered chiefly around the publication of a mimeographed bulletin called the *Waterfront Worker* which had an average paid circulation of about 1,000 to 1,500 copies. In the group which published the *Waterfront Worker*, were included a minority of Communists, and other militant elements. The guiding line for this group was above all to develop a militant group of workers united with the objective of breaking the Blue Book Union and to establish a real union. At times there was criticism that the *Waterfront Worker* did not take a clearly enough militant stand on this or that policy. When this criticism was justified, it could in every instance be traced to the desire of the Communist elements in the group not to sacrifice the unity of the militant elements for a clearer formulation in minor questions. In other words, the group felt it was more important to attain the larger objective of developing a united militant group (not limited to Communists alone) than to refuse to make a concession to this or that backward idea amongst the workers. Occasionally the Communist elements in the group made errors, in that they bent back too far. However, in the main, the *Waterfront Worker* is responsible for developing the spirit for organization and crystallizing the sentiment for the movement against the company union. During this time, the Marine Workers Union attempted, in various forms, to organize the men. These met with very small progress. The chief reasons were:

1. In the two or three years previous the Marine Workers Union had made some serious sectarian errors. These were utilized by the reactionary elements on the Waterfront to prevent any response from the men. This could have been easily broken down, if the Party and the Union had any of its members actually working on the docks. Unfortunately, however, our Marine Workers Union, although having as many as four and sometimes six full-time functionaries in San Francisco alone, had not a single worker on the docks. Because of this, we approached the entire situation from the outside, and were not able to break down the agitation against our union and against the Party on the Waterfront. The reactionary elements were led by some members of the old Red Book Union of 1919. This old union had a reputation, whether justified or not, for militant struggle. Under the activity of the company union, it had long since disappeared. However, some of the reactionaries who were formerly members of this old Red Book Union,

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by use of militant phraseology, succeeded in turning the minds of the men away from a militant union.

About the middle of 1933, an initiative group was formed, which included all elements (also some militants from the *Waterfront Worker*), to establish a regular local of the I.L.A. The sentiment for the I.L.A. rapidly developed. Yet there was some tendency among the Communists at that time to organize competitive M.W.I.U. recruiting. The I.L.A. movement was so overwhelming among the men, however, that it would have been suicide to take the handful of militants away from the general stream of the movement. The Party, therefore, took a determined stand against it.

In some of the smaller ports, on the West Coast, especially in the Northwest, functioning locals of the I.L.A. already existed, and in the short space of about six weeks, the overwhelming majority of the longshoremen on the West Coast joined the I.L.A.

From the moment of organizing, a struggle began between the militant elements on the one hand, who wanted action—to: (1) Improve conditions; (2) Destroy the Blue Book; (3) Establish West Coast Unity of all longshoremen—and the reactionaries, on the other hand, who aimed to organize a typical A. F. of L. reactionary union. In the course of this fight between the reactionary and militant elements, the militant elements succeeded in putting through a proposal to call an early West Coast Rank-and-File Convention. The reactionaries resisted such a movement, but their own radical phraseology counted against them. The men were convinced of the necessity for a rank-and-file controlled convention, and even succeeded in putting through a motion that to the Rank-and-File Convention, paid officers of the union should not qualify as delegates. This convention met in February, 1934, and remained in session for about ten days. The convention was a continual battle between the militants and the reactionaries. The reactionaries concentrated everything on winning the organizational leadership of the union, and in this they succeeded. At various times in the course of the convention they "laid off" in their opposition to certain militant proposals for fear it would antagonize the men. They did succeed in winning organizational leadership of the union. They elected an Executive Board and other posts, composed, for all practical purposes, of reactionaries. However, in the course of the convention, a series of militant proposals were adopted. These included:

Struggle for improved conditions, including raises in wages from 85 cents to $1.00 per hour, a thirty-hour week, hiring through I.L.A., and a united West Coast agreement with a uniform expiration date.

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There were also a number of directly political achievements at the convention. These included: 1. The adoption of a resolution against the loading of ships flying the Nazi flag. 2. The adoption of a proposal for a waterfront federation which was a first step towards united action between longshoremen and other marine crafts, especially the seamen, and for gang committees, port conferences, etc. 3. Unemployment insurance. 4. Against arbitration.

When the convention adjourned, the reactionaries felt victorious because they had succeeded in gaining organizational control of the union. They even thought they had dealt a blow of another sort at the militants in the course of the convention. This happened in the following way:

The San Francisco local had sent a very militant delegation. This delegation was the backbone and leadership of the militant sentiment in the convention. In the course of the convention a delegation was elected to present the workers' demands to the shipowners. When these demands were presented, the shipowners answered that they could not deal with this convention because it was largely dominated by Communist elements, and they gave as evidence that the San Francisco delegation allegedly had 16 out of 20 members who were Communists. The reactionary elements were in glee at this answer of the shipowners. But when this reached the men, they were highly indignant. The general sentiment being expressed by one non-Communist speaker from the ranks in the convention, who declared:

> "Do the shopowners think we are still in the Blue Book, that they are trying to dictate to us who our representatives should be?"

From this, it can be seen that although the rank-and-file convention ended organizationally successfully for the reactionaries, yet the whole movement crystallized and spread the militant sentiment of the men. But the convention did not end in complete organizational loss to the militants. In fact, as a result of the convention, a fairly strong permanent militant group was established in San Francisco with connection in all other ports of the West Coast.

Immediately after the convention the representatives of the I.L.A. entered into negotiations with the shipowners. These began on March 5, 1934, in a meeting with the Regional Board of the Federal Administration and the shipowners participating. The shipowners turned down the demands of the convention flatly. The negotiations dragged on until finally, about the middle of March, the men became somewhat fed up. Due both to the physically advantageous position of leadership which San Francisco holds on the West Coast, as well as the activities of the militants, action in

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San Francisco became of decisive importance for the entire Coast. Therefore when negotiations were obviously futile, the San Francisco local pressed forward, and by popular vote, set a strike date for March 23. They also elected a strike committee of 25 in the leadership of which were the most militant elements of the union.

The fakers, knowing they could not hold the men, did not act to stop this movement until the afternoon of March 22, the day before the strike date, when as a result of what clearly was cooperation between George Creel, head of the Regional Labor Board, the shipowners, and William Lewis, who was elected president of the entire West Coast Union, a telegram was negotiated from President Roosevelt, personally appealing to the men not to strike until the Federal Government could take action. It was clear from subsequent actions that one of the prime objectives in postponing the struggle was to hold it until the college terms would end, so that a plentiful supply of student scabs might be obtained. Without consulting any official body, Lewis immediately announced that the strike was off, and even tried to cancel a meeting of the strike committee which was slated for the evening of March 22. Since the strike was called for the very next morning, there was practically no opportunity to counteract this treacherous action of Lewis.

Also, the militants on the Strike Committee made a mistake in not contacting other ports immediately after they were elected, and taking the leadership out of the hands of Lewis and the District Executive Board. This mistake came about in the following way:

March 23, the date of the strike, was on Friday. On the previous Monday of the same week, in the San Francisco local meeting, a motion was put through giving full power in the strike to the District Executive Board which, as we have already pointed out, was composed of reactionaries. This motion made of the strike committee a body without any real authority. The passing of this motion also clearly indicated that even the San Francisco longshoremen still had strong illusions concerning the District Executive Board. As a result of this motion, the militants in the strike committee refrained from communicating with other ports because they were afraid of being accused of exceeding their legal authority. By Thursday night, when Lewis, at the request of President Roosevelt, called off the strike, it was then too late to correct the mistake of passivity that had been committed in the five previous days. Thus, the militants lost their opportunity in this first instance, in not aggressively seeking leadership of the West Coast.

The reactionary District Executive Board, a few days later, okayed the action of Lewis, and again began negotiating with the shipowners, this time together with a delegation of representatives

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from President Roosevelt. The negotiations dragged from March 28, when they were renewed, to the beginning of May. During this time, the negotiators made vague reports to the men of "progress". So far as the men knew, no agreement had been reached of any sort, but they generally took for granted that the shipowners were at least making some concessions to their demands. Subsequently it appeared that Lewis and his gang had secretly concluded what has since become known as the "April Third Agreement". This agreement was a complete sell-out. It provided for:

> "Central registration and hiring hall under joint control of employers and union representatives, for the purpose of limiting the men eligible to work in this port."

This was obviously a new *Fink Hall*, which aimed to blacklist the militants.

The next problem for the employers and these treacherous "representatives" of the I.L.A. was—how to "limit the men eligible to work". The reactionaries began to maneuver in such a way that the limitation be organized under some rule that would eliminate the militants. The head of the Industrial Association in a statement issued several months later, exposed the entire game when he complained that the sell-out April Third Agreement

> "was never made effective because the men could not agree on a date, after which only workers who had been employed prior to that date, would have the right to register for employment."

In the old Blue Book, only the most browbeaten, meek and loyal company men got "regular" work. Under this new system, which was being proposed, these men would be the only ones eligible to work, and large sections of the longshoremen, especially the militants, would be eliminated from the industry. While the fakers did not announce their agreement, they did try to get the local to accept their proposal to determine who were "legitimate" longshoremen. This was met with indignation and active opposition by all the longshoremen.

Finally, negotiations were ordered broken off at the beginning of May, and on May 7, the San Francisco local took a strike vote. The decision was unanimous—to strike the morning of May 9. The labor fakers were frantic. The afternoon newspapers of May 7, only a few hours before the strike vote was taken, contained a story issued by President Lewis which said:

> "An adverse vote [to the employers' proposals] did not necessarily mean a strike."

And on May 8, even after the strike vote was taken, International

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President Ryan wired from New York to the Northwest locals, which he considered more willing to follow his leadership, urging them not to strike. At the very last moment before the strike vote, a telegram was announced from the Department of Labor in Washingon, speaking for President Roosevelt, which urged the calling off of the strike. This time the men were prepared for such maneuvers, and they threw both telegrams out. In Seattle, the first telegram of Ryan succeeded in making the local waver so that on May 8, they still voted 60 per cent against a strike, but when they received information concerning the action of the San Francisco local, a second meeting was called, and a pro-strike vote was carried by a large majority. In the two or three days following, the entire West Coast longshoremen followed. Thus, the strike began, on the morning of May 9, and by May 11, stevedoring work on the entire West Coast was tied up.

PROBLEMS IN THE CALLING OF STRIKES

A strike movement cannot stand still. It must either spread and grow in militancy, or recede. Realizing this, the militant elements laid their plans for the period of activity following May 9. The first step was to get the seamen out in sympathy actions. The Marine Workers Industrial Union, even during the week previous to the calling of the strike, was already laying its plans for sympathetic actions. When the actual strike was called, the M.W.I.U. immediately began by calling meetings of ships' crews, and held conferences of ships' delegates. By May 12, a large conference of ships' delegates organied by the M.W.I.U., voted to go into sympathetic strike.

In the course of the next few days, the sympathy strike movement spread so that practically every ship coming into port was deserted by its crews. At first, the International Seamen's Union, an affiliate of the A. F. of L., led by the notorious labor fakers, Sharrenberg and Furuseth, stood aside, expecting that the seamen would not respond to any strike movement. There was skepticism even among I.L.A. members concerning how effective such a movement might be. At best, they hoped it would be a minor auxiliary aid to the longshore strike itself. While these groups wavered concerning the value of a seamen's strike movement, the M.W.I.U. with the crews of the newly struck ships, and the scalers, held conferences and set up an independent set of demands, so that the seamen's strike, which began purely as a sympathetic movement to the longshoremen, was transformed into a fully independent strike, with their own demands. In the subsequent period, the main problem

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became how to coordinate their strike settlement with that of the longshoremen. By May 16, the locals of the I.S.U. saw that they were being completely isolated by their refusal to strike, and so on that day the I.S.U. called upon its members and the ships crews to join the strike. To this day, however, Andrew Furuseth and the International Executive Board have not yet approved of the strike. Technically, therefore, the I.S.U. strike is illegal, because under their constitution, strikes are not valid until they are authorized by the International Office. On May 17, the stewards and cooks struck. On May 23, the master-mates and pilots, a small organization with militants in it, joined, followed by the marine engineers.

While the movement among the seamen was being organized by the M.W.I.U. the longshoremen were bending their efforts to call out the teamsters. The teamsters play a particularly strategic role for longshoremen. With the exception of only one other means of transportation (namely, the State Belt Line in California of which later), the teamsters are the men who move cargo after it is loaded onto the docks. From the first day of the longshore strike, all the pickets were instructed to talk to the men on the trucks, and urge them not to haul the scab cargo, but to join the strike. In the meantime, a committee was sent to the Teamsters' Union, to get them to join the action. At first Michael Casey, the chief labor faker of the Teamsters' Union, stood in the way of any sympathetic action and refused to allow the question to be taken up. However, because of the continual fraternization and discussion between the longshore pickets and the teamsters, in the course of the few days following, the teamsters were so thoroughly won over that finally, on May 14, the labor fakers were forced to yield. On that day, a decision was taken by the Teamsters' Union not to haul any cargo off the docks. This did not solve the problem altogether, because the most effective method for sympathy action on the part of the teamsters would have been a complete strike.

The next question was that of the Negro workers. For years the shipowners had followed a discriminatory policy against the Negro workers. They did this chiefly through isolating more than one hundred Negro longshoremen into one dock, namely, the Luchenback Dock. They held off hundreds of others, always promising them a job, but never giving them one. They continually held the lure before these Negro workers that in the event of the white workers going on strike, the Negro workers would then be assured jobs. The I.L.A. in its first stages, aided this discrimination, chiefly through their passive attitude towards the question of Negro workers, and in some cases, actual antagonism towards including

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them in the Union. Following the rank-and-file convention, however, this was largely broken down, but by then the Negro workers were not convinced of the sincerity of the I.L.A. men, and only a few joined that union. The Negro bourgeois press tried to take advantage of this situation. The San Francisco *Spokesman*, for example, published chiefly for Northern California, carried several articles in which it warned the Negro workers against believing the pledges of the white workers for solidarity and against joining the white workers' union. They spoke sneeringly of the attitude of the I.L.A. men, who, they alleged, had adopted a patronizing attitude towards Negro workers, only because they "wanted to squeeze a few more nickels out of the shipowners". This attitude was unjustified by fact, except in isolated cases. At the early stage of the strike, certain backward elements had made statements about this being a white man's strike. But this by no means was the general opinion. Especially so, because at the rank-and-file convention and subsequently, the policy of a passive attitude towards Negroes and discrimination against them, especially in the San Francisco Bay area, was broken down and the rank and file and militants of the I.L.A. made a sincere effort to unite black and white workers. The policy of this Negro bourgeois paper was to encourage the Negroes to become scabs. Precisely when the militancy of the workers offered the most favorable moment to promote Negro and white unity, they tried to prevent unity just at the moment of its possible culmination. However, with the aid of the Communist Party, the Scottsboro Action Committee, and the I.L.D., the Negro workers were reached with appeals against this position, and success was achieved in that only a very few of the Negroes finally scabbed. At this writing, although the books of the I.L.A. are officially closed to membership for the period of the strike, a move is afoot to make an execption of the Negro workers. By this, the I.L.A. men are showing they are willing to go out of their way in order to make up for their previous passivity towards the very important question of uniting black and white workers.

Finally, in the calling of the strike, the militants were confronted with the need of avoiding the error that was committed at the time when the first call to strike was issued. This error consisted in not developing the leadership of the San Francisco Strike Committee.

The question of whether pushing the leadership of the strike committee as against the District Executive Board, was within the limits of union legality, still prevented the strike committee militants from taking aggressive action. After several discussions, the comrades were finally convinced by being given the example of the

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struggle between the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly in Russia in 1917, where despite the legality of the Constituent Assembly and the unofficial character of the Soviets, all the life and problems of the people were centered in the Soviets, so that eventually in the course of struggle, the masses began to look to the Soviets for leadership out of their position and not to the Constituent Assembly. In the discussion, it was brought out how under the special circumstances which confronted us if in this strike we could do the same thing by putting all questions of relief, defense, picketing, negotiations, etc., to the strike committee, how rapidly the workers would themselves forget the strictures of legality and would instead accept the Strike Committee as their leaders, at the same time preventing any effort of the District Executive Committee to interfere with it. This would overcome the decision formerly made by the membership meeting on Monday prior to the calling of the strike on May 9, where it was decided to put all power in the hands of the District Executive Board. As a matter of fact, our policy in this connection proved to be correct, and now in the San Francisco local, the strike committee holds the real power of leadership of the masses of the longshoremen. They have succeeded in centering all the life of the strike into this Strike Committee, with the exception of negotiations. The failure to take over negotiation was paid for dearly in the weeks that followed. It was finally accomplished, however, on June 17, when Ryan and Company were booed and hissed off the platform. In this way, we have overcome the error previously committed through abiding by the limit of legality, and have raised the Strike Committee, which was composed of militant elements, to the position of the real leaders among the workers.

PROBLEMS IN THE CONDUCTING OF THE STRIKE

Once the strike was under way we divided our tasks under three main headings:

1. To keep the men united and prevent splits which might result in isolating the militants.

2. To keep the militancy on a continually upward swing.

3. To prevent any sell-out, and to gain as much as possible for the men out of the strike.

In the first days of the strike, the first job was the most difficult of all. The tradition in the industry was a splitting up of all the men into independently acting crafts. The seamen were under constant apprehension that the longshoremen would settle the strike

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and return to work without any consideration for them. In this fear the seamen were justified, because the longshoremen were under constant pressure from the I.L.A. officials "not to have too many tails to their kite", by which they meant to negotiate their own agreement independent of all the other crafts. On the other hand, the I.S.U. seamen were under a terrific pressure from their own leaders, who intrigued with the shipowners and who urged the men to "utilize the opportunity to get the most out of it for themselves, irrespective of the other crafts". Both groups of fakers warned the men of a repetition of the 1919 and 1921 strikes, where, in the first, the seamen scabbed on the longshoremen, and in the second, the longshoremen scabbed on the seamen.

The problem of unity was further complicated by the fact that most of the men were not yet convinced that Ryan and the other fakers were not their friends. Under pressure of this confused attitude of the men, even many of the militants were afraid to express sharply any formulations against Ryan. As a result, on a number of occasions the *Western Worker* and the Communist elements in the strike had to make concessions on minor points in these formulations so as not to break the unity of the men and to keep that unity for the main objectives of the strike.

A third problem in maintaining the unity was the uneven development of the strike. For example, in the Northwest, shipping was completely tied up. This same condition existed in San Francisco, with but one slight exception, of which we shall speak later. In Los Angeles, however, both because the union leadership was the most reactionary, and because militant organization was weak and the terror strong, scabbing went on on a large scale. As a result, in Seattle, Portland, and San Francisco, the A. F. of L. fakers, the capitalist press and the shipowners raised the cry that the continuation of the strike was a scheme of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, because it diverted shipping from other ports to their benefit. There was a strong danger that the men would be influenced by this agitation, and it had to be counteracted.

A fourth problem in maintaining unity was created by the continuous splitting activities of the fakers. This included such diverse elements as Paddy Morris, a renegade of Tacoma who is working with the Proletarian Party; "Dirty" White of the Socialist Party of San Francisco; Holman, former president of the San Francisco local, and a typical tool in the hands of the reactionary A. F. of L. officials; Lewis and Company, the leaders of the District Executive Board; and Ryan, president of the I.L.A. One example for each will illustrate the activity of these gentlemen:

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PADDY MORRIS, RENEGADE

When Ryan first arrived in San Francisco the fakers apparently decided to utilize his fresh arrival in order to stampede the militants into giving all power to the reactionaries in the settlement of the strike. In this, they almost succeeded through utilizing Paddy Morris. Morris arose in the local union meeting as it opened and delivered a long harangue in which he denounced capitalists, spoke for the class struggle, hurrahed for a militant strike, and finally concluded with the proposal that:

1. The seamen and longshoremen hold separate negotiations, and do not settle the strike jointly.
2. Hours and wages should be referred to arbitration.
3. The question of hiring halls be left in the hands of Ryan.

Under the impetus created by his preliminary revolutionary remarks, the men were confused and swept off their feet, and on that evening, the fakers actually succeeded in putting this program across. Two days later, at a special meeting called by the Strike Committee, after the men had had time to examine the meaning of their decisions, most of these actions were rescinded.

"DIRTY" WHITE

"Dirty" White, of the Socialist Party, maintained that his only difference with the Communists and other militants in the strike was that he believed the strikers had the best chance if the Communists stayed in the background. He believed this so firmly that when the I.L.A. called for a mass parade and Civic Center demonstration one Sunday, he went to various organizations and urged them to answer the I.L.A. call only on condition that it would be definitely decided that no Communists were either to participate in the parade or to speak at the meeting. Incidentally, this action, when exposed before the men, temporarily at least, eliminated "Dirty" White from the scene.

LEWIS AND CO.

Lewis and Company, the leaders of the District Executive Board at the early Strike Publicity Committee meetings, sneered at everything the Strike Publicity Committee did, with an air of confidence that the strike would soon be broken and all these "Reds" would be given their place, while he and his reactionary clique would ride high. This attitude on the part of Lewis and Company kept them aloof from the San Francisco Strike Publicity Committee for the first three weeks of the strike. Their action, in fact, helped the militants, because it gave them a breathing space in which to con-

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solidate their strength. It was only after the first three weeks that Lewis and Company, seeing their abstention was futile, entered with their disruptive tactics.

RYAN

Ryan's reputation reached the West Coast long before he arrived physically. The militants prepared the ground for him before he arrived. For two weeks before his arrival, the West Coast capitalist press carried long and laudatory articles about him. The militants were not idle either. So a battle over Ryan raged until finally, two days before his arrival, on May 22, the San Francisco *News* featured the following item:

> "That man [upon whom the outcome of the strike depends] is Joseph Ryan, International President of the I.L.A. He is due here Thursday night from New York after making considerable progress *in the settlement of longshore strikes in that city, and in Texas.*
>
> "Due to his efforts, 1,000 stevedores returned to work in New York yesterday, but even before Ryan could start westward, there was a heavy bombardment of propaganda against him from Communist ranks in San Francisco.
>
> "Even members of the longshoremen's strike committee openly cast doubt upon his powers in connection with the Pacific Coast strike."

Ryan arrived on Thursday night, and, as we have already related above, was able to put over his sell-out proposals before the men could properly acquaint themselves with him. That Saturday, however, the I.L.A. local rescinded most of the actions. On Monday morning following, the police launched their fiercest attack on the picket line that had yet been witnessed. As a result of this attack at least two are known to have been killed, and scores wounded. The same afternoon, obviously timed with the police attack, Ryan submitted a set of sell-out proposals. Following this, Ryan's actions were a continuous policy of deception. He submitted the shipowners' proposals continually to the men. Each time, however, with a different wording, although the essence of the proposals remained practically the same. On three different occasions, in an effort to save himself with the men, he announced publicly that he had made mistakes. On one occasion he submitted a secret referendum to a vote of the men, and although he personally toured the coast in behalf of his proposals, most of the locals refused to vote. In San Francisco, where it was submitted, it was snowed under 2350 to 78. On June 5th, the situation for Ryan became so bad that when he appeared before a meeting of the strikers in Frisco, he was loudly booed. At this point he began to change his tactics. Every time the

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police attacked workers, he blustered about calling out the longshoremen of the East as an answer to police terror. Of course, he not only didn't call them out, but when through the efforts of the M.W.I.U. in New York, some longshoremen were influenced to act in sympathy, Ryan telephoned New York to order them back to work. In order to weaken picketing, Ryan continually oozed optimism concerning negotiations for the settlement of the strike. We were paying bitterly for the Strike Committee and rank and file not having taken over negotiations from the first. The see-saw character in the attitude of the strikers really shows the weakness of the militants at the early stages of the strike, and the stage of confusion which then existed. But as the strike progressed, the attitude of the workers became more determined and clear.

OUR LACK OF SKILL IN WORKING WITH THE MASSES

The final problem in maintaining the unity of the men was our own lack of skill in working with masses. A few illustrations of this will suffice. In order that the Marine Workers Union should be aided to maintain its leadership of the seamen in the strike, it was arranged that a hotel should house all the striking seamen while they are in port, and that feeding should take place in the seamen's hall so that pickets could be properly checked in and out. However, some "very efficient" comrades decided it would be "more practical" to feed the Marine Workers Union members in the joint feeding hall conducted by the other unions, and made the change without proper consultation on the question. As a result, this important and influential check on the Marine Workers Union picket lines was weakened. On the positive side of the ledger in this connection, however, the men did make a fight to force the City Administration to give relief to longshore strikers' families, and the Marine Workers Union initiated a fight for the government feeding of the single men, which was, however, disrupted by opposition from the I.S.U. officialdom.

In the early stages of the strike, the International Labor Defense, the Workers International Relief and the *Western Worker* all offered, unconditionally, to put their resources at the disposal of the strikers. On the whole, this made a very good impression and was accepted by the men. In some cases, as in connection with relief, there was some hesitation to accept the W.I.R., but we proceeded without official acceptance to feed the pickets, and the resulting favorable reaction made it possible for the W.I.R. openly to enter relief work on the waterfront.

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DEVELOPING MILITANCY

We found that the secret of developing the militancy of the strike was to keep the men active, and doing something at all times. The danger spots were usually the week-ends, when there was a tendency to take the Sundays off. In order to counteract that, special activities besides picket lines, mass parades, meetings and strike affairs were arranged. Strikers were continually sent to outlying areas, particularly where college students, or unemployed, might be recruited as scabs. In one respect, we failed to carry through our policy. This was in connection with a small railroad operated in California by the State Government, called the State Belt Line. It is a typical example of Socialist Party "public ownership". The men on this line operate under a yellow-dog contract with the government, which prohibits them from striking for any cause under penalty of losing their seniority, insurance, etc. A number of efforts were made to pull them out. But the weakness of these efforts made for the continued scabbing of this road. A few half-hearted attempts were made, through marking up the freight cars with the slogan "Scab Goods, Don't Haul", but this proved to be very insufficient. In fact, there was a feeling among the dockers that we should not go too hard on the State Belt Line men because there was some justification in their failure to act in sympathy. Of course, another important factor which prevented effective picketing, especially in relation to the State Belt Line, was the terrific terror which developed. The San Francisco Police Chief issued the slogan "Clubs Are Trumps", and under this slogan, mercilessly clubbed down and shot into strikers' ranks. In one way, this helped the fight against the "Red scare". On Wednesday, May 30, following the Monday when the police made the big attack on the picket line, a Y.C.L. National Youth Day demonstration was held on the waterfront. The police attacked it even more ferociously than they had attacked the longshoremen's picket line previously. As a result, the men immediately showed a spirit of solidarity, and the I.L.A. issued an official statement in sympathy with the Y.C.L. In some isolated ports, particularly in Portland, it was reported that a dozen or more policemen had to be suspended because of their sympathy with the strike, and their refusal to act as thugs for the shipowners.

WRONG WAYS OF ATTACKING THE MISLEADERS

We have spoken before of our own lack of skill in working with masses. Because we have seen the same errors committed in so many struggles, a few illustrations of this lack of skill would be instructive. The outstanding example is the unskilled way in which

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we attacked the fakers. Even the *Daily Worker*, which certainly knows better, allowed, at the very beginning of the strike, a title to be written to one picture at the top of the front page, reading:

> "The Marine Workers Industrial Union has called on striking longshoremen to resist the strike-breaking efforts of the I.L.A."

In view of the fact that the local I.L.A. strike leadership in San Francisco were militants, and that the real intent of the *Daily* was to warn against the possible strike-breaking tactics of the District and National officials, certainly this featured sentence was a very careless and harmful one. The writing of such a careless sentence almost cost us our unity with the men. When the first copies of the *Daily* went down to the waterfront, there was immediately a resentment amongst the men, and the reactionaries took advantage of it by raising the cry, "This is Communist strike-breaking".

An example of a similar nature of lack of skill in working with masses is the manner in which comrades wanted to discredit the fakers. When Ryan first arrived, and previous to that, in connection with Lewis and Finnegan (the District officials located in San Francisco), there was constant pressure from some comrades, particularly comrades who had nothing to do with the strike and were away from the immediate situation, to issue leaflets calling these fakers all sorts of names—none of which the workers believed, or would believe. The issuance of leaflets of that nature would result only in provoking an anti-Communist sentiment because every attack upon the fakers was regarded by the yet confused mass of men as an attack upon the entire organization. We therefore followed the tactic instead of continually putting the fakers in a position where they had to come out against certain militant policies, and defend their own reactionary and treacherous actions. It was through such a process that we gradually won over the membership. In fact, whereas at the beginning, the men did not listen to any criticism of Lewis, Finnegan and Ryan and Company, and even voted this crew full power to negotiate and settle the strike, at this writing, Ryan has been booed off the platform, and driven out of San Francisco. Some opportunist elements might take courage from this criticism, and justify their frequent resistance to exposing labor fakers in their unions. In answer to any such possible reaction, we want to emphasize here that even we were not energetic enough in exposing the fakers at the beginning, among San Francisco longshoremen. Our criticism is not of a too energetic exposure of the fakers, but of a too unskilled exposure. Mere name-calling may satisfy the record so far as carrying out our policy to discredit the

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fakers, but it does not necessarily achieve the purpose of discrediting them. A skilled handling of the situation, however, an aggressive militant policy, and especially a continuous drive towards greater militancy in the specific situation, will eventually achieve that purpose. Exposing Ryan on the basis of what happened in the Gulf ports and on the East Coast, halped with but a few men. But when we were able to expose Ryan's actions, and mobilize the men against him specifically on the West Coast developments, Ryan was completely discredited. Had we taken a sectarian position and broken with the men on phrase formulations in the early part of the struggle, our later drive against Ryan would have had no following.

This same lack of skill in working with masses was illustrated in another point. The rumor reached San Francisco, that Peterson, an I.L.A. faker in San Pedro, had made a separate agreement with some shipowners to load, thus breaking the united West Coast front. In my own mind, I am convinced that it is easily within Peterson's character to have done such a thing. However, there was no proof of the assertion. Despite this fact, one of the comrades (not a longshoreman, but active in another capacity), thinking to strike against the fakers, took it upon himself to send out news releases in the name of the *Western Worker* relating this rumor, but leaving the impression that it was official and confirmed. The strikers immediately came to the conclusion that this was a story spread by shipowners to demoralize the men. When they found out that this notice had some connection with the *Western Worker*, they were so enraged that the close relation between the strikers and the *Western Worker* hung in the balance by a thread. The most loyal militants on the Strike Committee succeeded in holding in abeyance a motion to break with the *Western Worker* for a few hours, during which time the matter was straightened out. In this one can see an illustration where mere zealousness in exposing fakers is not effective. One must be responsible in such a situation for what one says. To date, despite strenuous efforts, we have not been able to find real proof that this rumor concerning Peterson was true.

The source of much of our lack of skill in working in the situation came from an oppositionist and minority ideology, which some of our comrades have. These comrades had a tendency to become professional critics and "line givers". They examine the struggle, not for its action but for perfection in its phrases. Real mass movements do not reach absolute perfection of phrase or thought. Their revolutionary character is there nevertheless. A few comrades who knew little or nothing of what went on were the worst offend-

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ers. In many cases, this criticism was extremely supercilious, based on ignorance and an academic approach. It came largely from comrades who were not involved in the practical strike activities, but who had read previously resolutions of other strikes and tried mechanically to transfer that criticism to this strike. A case in point is the question of picketing. For several days in the course of the strike, especially following the two outbursts of terror on May 28, and 30, the longshoremen yielded to the pressure of the police, and instead of picketing directly in the entrance of the docks, picketed across the street. The Strike Committee worked frantically against this tendency and succeeded in overcoming it only several weeks later. Yet, the "wise" know-alls demanded that the *Western Worker* issue a criticism of the Strike Committee because the men were picketing on the other side of the street. To issue such a criticism, not only did not correspond to fact and would have been sheer idiocy, but would have put us in a position of sectarian isolated oppositionists. Instead of doing that, the militants helped the Strike Committee which was trying to overcome the situation.

A word is here in point concerning the "Red scare", and how the Party appeared before the workers. In order to get the proper background, you should know that our Party in California has been under a terrific anti-Red barrage for almost a year. Hardly a day passes without 8-column headlines, feature stories, and editorials in the capitalist papers, containing provocations against Communists. The State government, through both the late Governor Rolph and present Governor Merriam, has issued statements justifying and provoking lynch terror against Communists. As is well-known, for the past year, this terror has been widespread indeed. From the cotton strike in the Fall of 1933 to this moment, seven California workers have been murdered in strikes, over 900 jailed, close to 600 tried, scores convicted and hundreds wounded. This terror also took the form of an ideological campaign, with lectures to students in the schools, lectures before churches and clubs of various sorts, etc. It was, of course, the reaction of the capitalist press against the increased ability of the Party to lead determined strike and other struggles. When the longshore strike opened, the capitalist class at first gloated over the fact that the Communists were being kept out. They were able to do this on the basis of assurance from the labor skates in the District Executive Committee that the militants would be eliminated. Before the strike was several weeks old, the papers were howling with "Red scare" stories, typical of which was: "Strike Out of Hand, in Control of Communists".

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Despite this fact, the I.L.A. Strike Committee kept the *Western Worker* as its spokesman; we were able to fight down the "Red scare" against the Marine Workers Industrial Union among the seamen; and after a bitter fight, give it a place on the joint Strike Committee. We have recruited to date, in San Francisco alone, about 25 longshoremen, and over 50 seamen; in San Pedro about 40 of both categories together, and in the Northwest ports, many more, although we have not the figures at hand at this moment. In connection with showing the Party's role to the strikers and working class generally, we had another example of the stupid sectarian tendencies that yet persist. When the men took certain militant actions, these comrades insisted that the District Committee issue leaflets saying in effect: "We told you to do so and so". This would have been an excellent weapon in the hands of the shipowners. The men were grateful that the "Reds" gave them help and leadership without bombast. At several strike meetings, representatives of the *Western Worker* were officially invited to, and did speak from the platform. At many mass meetings, especially those held against the terror, and not directly under the I.L.A. auspices, Communist candidates spoke side by side with the best known I.L.A. and seamen strike leaers. At one point the reactionaries became especially menacing with anti-Red agitation, urging having nothing to do with Communists. However, the popularity of the Party was shown the next day when the Party sent an official donation of $25 to the Strike Committee. After a short discussion, this was warmly accepted, and with considerable applause at the mention of the Party, and the reactionaries found themselves in a very uncomfortable position. The leadership of the strike in San Francisco by Communist and other militant elements is well-known and accepted. All through the strike, the Communist participants have become increasingly better liked by the workers. This was accomplished, not only by the Party, but also,—needless to say, much against its intentions—by the Police Department, which thought to frighten the strikers by showing them the political police records of the Party members who were strike leaders. However, by that time, the ground had been well-prepared, and these comrades gained all the greater prestige for this. In one strike demonstration, the police with a handful of misled strikers, stopped the sale of the *Western Worker*. In the next I.L.A. membership meeting, Ryan tried to follow up with an attack on the Communist Party and urged to expel anyone selling the *Western Worker*. The men answered by unanimously voting to "apologize to the Communist Party because the sale of the *Western Worker* was stopped" by unauthorized members.

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THE PERSPECTIVES FOR THE OUTCOME

What are the perspectives in the settlement of the strike? On June 16, for the second time in the course of the strike, all capitalist papers carried tremendous headlines that the strike was settled, that it had been settled in an agreement between Ryan and the fakers in the Teamsters and other unions, the Mayor of San Francisco, and the shipowners. This agreement was a complete sell-out. It referred the question of hours and wages to arbitration. It created joint hiring halls between the shipowners and the I.L.A., specifying that the I.L.A. end would be controlled, not by elected representatives of the rank and file, but by the officials. It carried a sentence which speaks about the fact that the agreement is made between the "responsible" I.L.A. heads and the shipowners. On June 17, all the newspapers carried pictures of the labor fakers shaking hands with the shipowners, and congratulating each other on the conclusion of the strike. On June 17, however, a mass meeting was called in San Francisco, and this was followed by mass meetings in Portland and Tacoma, and after that the other ports. The San Francisco mass meeting, which was the best attended longshoremen's meeting in the entire strike, was from beginning to end a tremendous demonstration against Ryan and the fakers before the militants. Ryan was howled out, and in the end had to plead "that your International President should be allowed at least three minutes to plead his case".

Finally, the close to three thousand men gathered in the hall allowed him the three minutes, but he was interrupted constantly, and finally had to quit. As against that, Harry Bridges, accepted leader of the militants, and branded in the press as an outstanding Red, and an alien (an Australian by birth) was warmly received with a splendid ovation, and every proposal he made in the name of the militant strike committee, was carried. This included a rank-and-file negotiations committee—the final link completing the original plan for Strike Committee leadership. Under the impetus of this momentum, 1,000 seamen, under I.S.U. auspices, held a meeting that night, and repudiated the policies of their leaders and voted for a united front with the Marine Workers Industrial Union. The next day the I.S.U. fakers declared the meeting unconstitutional because it was not limited only to paid up members, and demanded the unseating of the Marine Workers Industrial Union in the Central Strike Committee. The M.W.I.U. representatives offered "not to stand in the way of unity" and would withdraw. This was an error which the fakers took advantage of, and expelled the M.W.I.U. On June 17, a paid-up membership meeting of the I.S.U. again

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reversed the fakers and voted for a united front with the M.W.I.U. At this writing, the fight to reseat the M.W.I.U. delegates is still on—but M.W.I.U. speakers are allowed at official mass meetings held under joint auspices. Most of our difficulties in this connection were due to our failure to organize an effective I.S.U. opposition. Our later progress was due to our correcting this weakness.

That same day, news came that Portland, Tacoma, and Everett had followed in the same spirit as San Francisco. In Los Angeles, because of the weaknesses of the militant group, it was voted, by a small majority, to accept the Ryan plan. This, however, is ineffective because they did not have the two-thirds majority as required by the West Coast constitution, and because the rest of the Coast outweighed them. Ryan, however, still at the service of the shipowners, immediately rushed to San Pedro where the weakest link might be broken. Thus far, he has gotten nowhere. From Seattle, we have no news at this writing. There, however, Ryan had previously made a break with the Alaska ships. He was able to confuse the workers into concluding a separate agreement with them. The weakness of the militant group made it possible for him to get away with it. However, since then, a considerable reaction is taking place, and it is possible that following the Ryan fiasco of June 16, the Alaska men will again come out.

Already Holman, former reactionary president of the San Francisco local of the I.L.A. and now expelled, is trying to form a separate union, but to date he has not even succeeded in getting the signatures of ten bona fide longshoremen in order to get recognition as a minority union under the provisions of the N. R.A. In the meantime, the shipowners are losing in the San Francisco port alone $109,000 daily, according to their own statement. In addition, $700,000 is lost daily in other business which is interconnected. To date the shipowners alone have lost over three million dollars. To consider the loss for the whole coast, one can multiply this figure by at least three. How long the shipowners can hold out under this terrific loss is hard to tell. They are doing their best to mobilize sentiment by spreading rumors that this is really a strike to seize governmental power. As against this, the strikers' ranks are still solid. In San Francisco to date, only five longshoremen are scabbing out of about 4,000. There are many more scabs than these, but they are imported from elsewhere. About 110 ships are tied up in the harbor, giving testimony to the effectiveness of the strike. Whether the men will win or not depends on whether the

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strike movement can continue to spread and rise in militancy. At this moment there is considerable agitation going on for a general strike. The I.L.A. strike committee has already issued the call asking other locals to respond. The Machinists Local 68, the Painters Local No. 1158 and a few others, have already answered the call, and in the next week or so the rest of the locals will vote on the question. The referendum is going on over the heads of the Central Labor Council, which ruled the question out of order at its last meeting, and quickly adjourned for fear the fakers would not be able to hold the ranks in the face of the demand of the rank and file. In the last few days, encouraging reports have come from the East, the Australian and some European ports concerning sympathy actions. If these sympathy actions spread, especially on the East Coast and in the Gulf ports, the victory of the strike is certain.

The attitude of the bourgeois press regarding settlement is shown by the leading editorial in the San Francisco *News* of June 18:

> "At the outset of the strike many believed that the men were making a mistake and letting themselves in for a quick and decisive defeat. Few realized the solidarity that they have since demonstrated through their success in enlisting the sympathy of the teamsters and of other marine workers and in almost completely tying up this port.
>
> "It appeared then that with thousands out of work the men had chosen a time to strike that would play into the hands of employer extremists who would welcome an opportunity to dispose of unionism once and for all.
>
> "Events have proven otherwise. Every thoughtful citizen of San Francisco has been impressed with the sincerity and depth of the men's determination and sense of grievance.
>
> "But this does not alter our conviction that they must act now to profit from their initial advantage.
>
> "A war to the finish might easily grow into the worst disaster for San Francisco since the fire of 1906. It would mean lost lives and broken families, and defeat would deal a blow to the cause of unionism from which it would take years to recover."

The victory of the strike would be a tremendous advance for the whole working class. It would establish the right of militant leaders to function within the A. F. of L. It would make impossible the elimination of the militants from the industry. It would give courage to the whole working class of the West to fight for demands similar to those of the longshoremen, and above all, it would establish for the first time in the history of the United States, absolute solidarity between longshoremen and seamen, and a large measure of solidarity with the rest of the working class.

Above all, the San Francisco Maritime Strike is a tribute to the correctness of the Party's policy of concentration—the returns for

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even the considerable effort put in were far greater in revolutionary advance than practically any other activity.

* * *

We must add a note about the tremendous mass meeting which took place last night (June 19—the end of the sixth week of the strike) in the Civic Auditorium in San Francisco, under the joint auspices of all striking unions. After a stubborn fight the Marine Workers Industrial Union was included in the conduct of the meeting. Comrade Harry Jackson, who spoke, was warmly received. Also, all the other strikers who got the greatest ovation are those who have been labelled and are known throughout the city and among the strikers as the "Red leaders". Ryan asked to speak, but was refused. Those speakers not known as "Reds" were well-received but not in the same thunderous spirit, and at least one faker who wriggled his way on to the speaker's list was received with boos.

Mayor Rossi, in his speech, spoke for everyone supporting the A. F. of L. This was received with tremendous boos all over the hall. The political significance lies in the maturing understanding of the masses who understand the role of the officialdom of the A. F. of L., despite the fact that this strike is technically being led by the A. F. of L. affiliate.

The hall was jammed, every seat having being taken and most of the aisles crowded. There were between eighteen and twenty thousand people present. The height of the meeting was reached when John Delaney, the best known militant on the waterfront, and called a Communist leader in all the press, which also gave publicity to his record as a Communist activist, called for a general strike. This brought the whole audience to its feet in a thunderous demonstration.

This meeting shows the strike at this date has not yet reached the height of its militancy, and the movement towards a general strike is, possibly too slowly, yet undoubtedly, moving forward.

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The Communist Party in the Birmingham Strikes

By NAT ROSS

FOLLOWING the World War, in the period 1919-1922, a number of big strikes in the coal, steel, and railroad industries took place in the Birmingham region. The strikes were defeated and the unions smashed on the rock of division between the white and Negro strikers. Such were the bitter fruits of the Jim-Crow policy of the A. F. of L. officialdom. For a number of years a feeling of mutual distrust continued in the ranks of labor. There was even a tendency toward pessimism among some sections of the workers. From 1922 until the latter part of 1933, no strikes of importance occurred. Even some of the Communist Party members declared that the Birmingham workers would never fight or stick together because the white workers, they claimed, hated the Negroes and called them scabs and the Negroes disliked and distrusted the white workers. But the Party leadership hammered away against these opportunist explanations of the mood of the masses. The Party explained that the miners and steel workers of the Birmingham area would stand in the forefront in the revolutionary struggle in the South. The basic Birmingham proletariat was restless under the sledge hammer attacks of the capitalist class. The Party made the Birmingham area the main point of concentration in its work in the South.

Birmingham was unique since it was the only place in the United States, if not in the whole world, where the main raw materials for steel—coal, iron ore, and limestone—were found side by side. The Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Corporation, known as the T.C.I. (United States Steel subsidiary), along with three other steel corporations, controlled the lives of over forty thousand of their steel workers and miners. The Party recognized that these so-called backward Southern Negro and white slaves of the steel corporations would some day surge forward in the forefront of the American revolutionary struggle. Their struggle would inevitably carry them into open conflict with the Steel Trust, whose giant power in the Birmingham area was built on a rotting foundation.

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Birmingham lies on the fringe of the Alabama Black Belt. Its industry clearly shows the ear marks, in slightly varying forms, of slave survivals in the share-cropping system of the agrarian Black Belt. Four out of every five workers employed in steel and mining are Negroes brought in from the cotton fields. The white workers in the main also came from the Black Belt fields, while Birmingham industry was being built up during the first two decades of this century. The wages of the Negroes were lower than those of the workers in any other section of the United States. The wages of the main mass of white workers were also at a starvation level. The diet was not much better than the pellagra diet in the cotton fields. The Negroes were given the heaviest and dirtiest work. Convict labor flourished, especially in the coal mines. The Negro masses were Jim-Crowed in back alleys, and forced to live in tumble-down shacks. Company towns were guarded like prisons. Wages were paid in scrip, and the workers were forced to trade at the company stores, where the prices were such that the workers spoke of them as "robbery without a pistol".

The Steel Trust controlled everybody and everything. The labor union was taboo. Even six months ago when the A. F. of L. tried to hold a union meeting in a public park in the T.C.I.-controlled steel town of Fairfield, the meeting was prohibited on the ground that bringing Negro and white workers together was a violation of the Jim-Crow ordinance. In practice the N.R.A. and the Jim-Crow Bourbons were working hand in glove. The stench of the slave market filled the Birmingham steel towns and mining camps. From the very outset, the Party pointed out that this stench must be wiped out as a step toward progress. Unity instead of Jim Crowism became a rallying slogan. The white workers could improve their own conditions only if they solidly united with the Negroes in the fight for better conditions and equal rights for the Negro masses. The key to unity lay in unionizing the Southern masses on the basis of united struggle.

Yet as late as the end of 1933, our Party in the Birmingham district, although leading the historic struggles of the share-croppers and the struggles for freedom of the Scottsboro boys and for the needs of the unemployed, did not really begin to put into practice the main instructions of the Open Letter. These instructions were made even more specific in the guiding Letter of the Central Committee, addressed in January, 1934, to the Birmingham district, which declares:

> "Because there is a large organized mass farm movement (share-croppers) which looks for guidance to the Party, because the main

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vital roots for the organized struggle for the right of self-determination are found in the farming mass of Negroes in District 17, precisely for these reasons is it all the more extremely necessary to build the Communist Party in District 17 in the most solid position in the basic industries."

These instructions were still further amplified and concretized in the resolution adopted at the District Convention in March, which laid down a definite policy of concentration, the building of the Party in the big industries, and the development of a fighting trade union movement as indispensable pre-conditions for revolutionary leadership of the big strikes which were already in the air.

RAPID GROWTH OF TRADE UNIONS

In the past year Birmingham has become unionized. Discontent was growing among the masses of workers and they saw the need for collective action. For a time they took seriously the glib promises of Section 7-a of the N.R.A. But the four years' campaign and struggles of the Party in the Birmingham area for the unity and unionization of white and Negro workers had not fallen on barren ground. With scores of paid organizers in the field, the A. F. of L. was soon able to organize almost all the 21,000 coal miners, and the 8,000 ore miners in the Alabama field. Progress was made in unionizing some of the steel mills, as well as in other industries in Birmingham. Throughout this period the Party called on the workers not to trust the A. F. of L. bureaucrats, but to take the leadership of their unions into their own hands. The workers joined the unions because they wanted better conditions. White and Negro workers were members of the same union, and they began to feel their power. These workers wanted their union recognized and they wanted higher wages, which meant a fight against the slave wage-differential established by the N.R.A.

With the beginning of this year, sporadic strikes broke out in the coal fields. Two thousand laundry workers struck, tying up every laundry and cleaning plant in Birmingham. Shirt makers struck; C.W.A. and then relief workers, went on strike. The smouldering resentment of the Birmingham proletariat was bursting into flame. Cafeteria workers, butchers in the chain stores, packing house workers are on strike while this is being written. Workers in the Selma Manufacturing Co. textile mill, preparing for strike, have been locked out. Following the strike in the commercial coal mines in March, came the general coal strike of the commercial mines and captive mines of the Steel Trust in Alabama. Eight thousand ore miners tied up all the ore mines in the Birmingham region. The Republic Steel men struck on April 24, making the

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first breach in the steel industry in Birmingham in thirteen years. All of these strikes involve the question of the recognition of the A. F. of L. union, and the fight for higher wages. All categories of workers are involved—men and women, youth, white and Negro, skilled and unskilled—and 99 per cent of these strikers are native Americans. Beyond the lynch clouds the dim light of a new day is dawning in the South as white and Negro union brothers stand shoulder to shoulder on the picket lines, facing the machine guns of the National Guards.

THE GREAT GENERAL COAL STRIKE

In this article I want to draw some lessons from all of these strikes, with special emphasis on the coal strike. As I write, the general ore strike still continues. The Republic Steel men are still out, and the steel situation is at the breaking point. The strike of the coal miners of practically all the commercial mines was ended in the middle of March by an agreement which raised the basic pay of inside skilled workers from $3.20 to $3.40 a day; the main mass of miners were left in the same miserable condition as they were before the strike; they had not even gained recognition of the U.M.W. of A. The miners went back to work, but they were cursing as they entered the pit mouths.

On March 31, General Johnson issued an order raising the basic day rate for skilled inside men in the Alabama mines from $3.40 to $4.60. While this rate still maintained the differential compared with the rate in the Eastern fields, it was, nevertheless, a big increase. This move of Johnson's was an effort to prevent a nation-wide coal strike, as well as general strikes in other basic industries, which were imminent at the time. It was also a move of the big corporations to put the small independent mines of the Southern fields out of business. It was furthermore a maneuver to pacify the rapidly stirring Negro masses and to cover up the increasing lynch and Jim-Crow character of the New Deal, by appearing to attack the Southern differential whose main victim was the Negro masses. It soon became clear even to the General himself, that he had overstepped himself and that the mounting chaos and confusion in the N.R.A. had got the better of him.

The Alabama coal operators answered the N.R.A. order by taking out an injunction in Federal Court against paying the increased wage. While it was clear from the outset that the N.R.A. officials and the Alabama coal operators would come to an agreement, the reconciliation of the miners was a more difficult task. The miners struck. They demanded the $4.60 rate. They wanted to get rid

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of the differential. They wanted to know why it was that digging a ton of coal in Alabama was worth less than in Pennsylvania. In the first week of the strike every commercial mine was closed down. But the mines of the steel corporations remained at work.

In the second week in April, the 21,000 miners of the giant captive mines, influenced by the Party and especially its shop and mine bulletin, *The Blast*, went on strike. Every mine in the Alabama field was shut tight. In this situation the Party pointed out that the miners could win their fight for recognition of the U.M.W. of A. and for increased pay only if the rank and file took over the leadership of the strike, dislodged the union bureaucrats, and prevented by mass picketing the attempt to bring scabs into the mines, with white and Negro miners standing side by side in solid ranks. The strike continued for a whole month. The mines were kept shut as mass picketing went on night and day. The miners were fighting mad—they were out to win. White and Negro miners held together. Such militancy and solidarity of the strikers had never before been seen in Birmingham. The solidarity of the strikers infuriated the bosses and the militancy of the Negro miners drove them into a frenzy.

The *Birmingham News* declared:

> "Groups of armed strikers, composed largely of Negroes, remained in virtual command of the T.C.I. mines."

The *Birmingham Age-Herald*, the other organ of the T.C.I., declared:

> "The fact that Negro miners have become conspicuous in clashes with officers is a fresh and be-deviling factor."

In an editorial the same paper said:

> "The inescapable truth is that a continuance of strikes amounts to playing into the hands of Communists . . . The wholesale unionizing which has taken place in recent months has included Negro as well as white miners. As a matter of organizing strategy, that was a sound step, although it does run counter to the practice of the A. F. of L. in the past. [That is to say, if the A. F. of L. doesn't organize the Negroes, they will flock wholesale to the Communists.] But as things have worked out, Negroes have been conspicuous in demonstrations and other activities. What the arming of people who nurse their own racial grievances could lead to must be left to the imagination."

But in the meantime the miners saw in the Party slogans the expression of their needs. Of the influence and prestige that the Party gained among the miners, perhaps the most eloquent testimony during the height of the strike was the statement:

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"The T.C.I. officials have laid the responsibility for much of the unrest of the county at the door of Communist agitators."

The corporations tried in many ways to break the strike. The T.C.I. was especially active because it was the miners of the T.C.I. who had taken the front rank in the display of revolutionary militancy, in the remarkable unity and solidarity of the miners in their mass picketing and in their refusal to abide by the sell-out instructions of the district bureaucrats of the U.M.W. of A. At this point the press tried to whip up a lynch spirit. It claimed that a Negro had attempted to rape the wife of none other than a T.C.I. deputy. The two police officers at the head of the Birmingham "Red" Squad were placed in charge of the hunt for the imaginary Negro rapist. But, despite all the tactics of the bosses to break the strike in the traditional way by whipping up the lynch spirit and dividing white and Negro, they had no success.

The Birmingham workers were watching the strike. They knew that the miners were fighting for the interests of all the workers. The solidarity of the white and Negro miners affected the other Birmingham workers. The remarkable militancy of the Negro miners led the average white worker to change his tone from "the Negro is a scab", to "the Negro is a damn good union man and a real fighter". And the solidarity actions of the white workers with the Negroes on the picket lines were fast dissipating the century-old distrust of the Negro masses toward the white workers.

The spirit of the Birmingham proletariat was high as the miners fought on. There was talk of a general strike. Workers were saying, "Now is the time for all union men to stick together". In this situation the Party explained again that it was necessary to strike a solid blow at the Steel Trust. The 8,000 ore miners (all the ore mines are captive mines) were stacking up ore for the steel mills, while their brother coal miners were striking against those very same steel mills. The Party, therefore, called on the ore miners and the steel workers to join the strike, and all workers in Birmingham were urged to support this great struggle. In one of its most important leaflets issued during this whole strike period, the Party declared:

"The miners' strike must be won! They can win the war against the N.R.A. slave differential with the support of the steel workers and the ore miners. Unless the miners win the strike, it means that the bosses will batter down the wage standards of the miners, and open fresh attacks on all Southern workers. Steel workers, ore miners, a victory for the miners is a victory for you! Join the strike for higher wages and to smash the differential."

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While the coal strike was nearing its end, the steel workers of Republic struck. In the meantime the pressure among the rank-and-file ore miners was so great that the officials of the Smelter Union, despite all of their maneuvering, were forced on April 24, to issue a strike call for May 4. On May 4, every ore mine was shut down, and the strike, six weeks later, still continues.

In the meantime, fear of the spreading of the coal strike and the tying up of all of Birmingham by a general strike forced the N.R.A. to act quickly. On April 22, General Johnson withdrew his rash order of March 16. Instead of the increase from $3.40 to $4.60 in the commercial mines, the skilled inside men were to get $3.80 a day. There were nominal increases for other categories of miners. The working day was cut from eight to seven hours, with a five-day week, and despite all the promises, the union was not recognized. The *Birmingham Post*, in an editorial, put it frankly:

> "The corporation (T.C.I.) does not recognize the United Mine Workers of America."

But Bill Mitch, the District President of the U.M.W. of A., was anxious to herd the men back to work. He and the bosses were very much afraid of the May Day demonstration in Birmingham. They were afraid of the impending steel and ore strike. After three weeks of threats and browbeating, Mitch forced the miners back to work. The coal miners are working again, but they are talking strike. They are not satisfied. The union is not recognized. The slave differential of the N.R.A. still continues. The stench of the slave market still exists in the coal camps in many forms. The coal miners of Alabama will be heard from again—soon.

THE N.R.A.—ENEMY OF THE SOUTHERN MASSES

The injunction against the N.R.A. order by the coal operators was followed by a feverish campaign to maintain the differentials. The independent Southern capitalists were especially active. The steel corporations were not directly involved in the March 31 order, which applied only to commercial mines. They had faith in the N.R.A.—instrument of Wall Street. They became involved only when their miners struck for the $4.60 rate. They knew in advance that things would be adjusted and the differential maintained. But the independent capitalists were fuming. At a meeting of three hundred industrialists from all over the South, which was held in Birmingham, one of their number declared, amidst wild applause:

> "Sherman's march to the sea was no more destructive than the N.R.A. is going to be to the South. Before it is over we may have secession."

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There was no question that there were growing difficulties in the camp of the ruling class. But the more able Southern leaders knew that the differential wage would be maintained by the N.R.A. For a while the Roosevelt Administration remained silent to maintain the illusions it had created in the minds of the miners. The main mass of workers, during the first phase of the strike, thought of the operators on one side, as against the Federal Government and the union on the other. It seemed to many of them a fight of the union and the N.R.A. against the coal operators. But this dilly-dallying of the N.R.A. began to disillusion the miners, and later the cry of the N.R.A. for arbitration on the one side, and its direct support of unparalleled terror and even murder of strikers began to expose the actual role of the N.R.A.

The militant fight for recognition of the unions and against the differentials was a life-and-death question. The Southern rulers were out to smash the unions and maintain starvation wages. And they received Roosevelt's support because maintaining the differential was the N.R.A. method of slashing the wages throughout the country. A campaign of terror was let loose against the strikers. Hundreds of armed deputies were sent into the strike zone. Unarmed Negro pickets and union men were murdered in cold blood. Strikers were arrested. In one day fifty warrants were issued against strikers after two Negro miners in the strike had been murdered and a dozen wounded by deputies' gunfire. The National Guard was placed on twenty-four hour duty in the strike zone. In the meantime, a series of bombings and dynamitings of homes, commissaries, bridges, etc., took place almost daily for a whole month, and still continues. While these terroristic actions were mainly the doings of company agents and provocateurs in collaboration with the police and the A. F. of L. officialdom, the blame was placed directly on the strikers and the Communists.

Every possible scheme was used to try to break the strikes. The police declared war against the Communist Party. Party leaders were arrested. Homes were raided daily for a week. The White Legion (a K.K.K. outfit with a new name), threatened Communists and strikers with their lives. They tried to mobilize the most backward elements of the white population for fascist violence. These fascists dictated policy to City Commissioner Downs. They worked together with the police. They directed the prosecution of the Communists in court. A tremendous development of fascist terror was apparent. And these very leaders of the terror drive were the main officials of the Roosevelt gang in Birmingham. In this way and by its tacit support the New Deal showed itself especi-

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ally in later stages of the strike, as a Jim-Crow, lynch, and fascist deal against the Southern masses. The arrest of the Communists was meant to break the strike because the influence of the Party among the strikers was mounting. But it had no such effect. The militant self defense of the Communists in the barred court room rang out on the picket lines, and the slogan, "No settlement of the strike until all strikers and Communist leaders are released", actually forced the release of the Communists, and the postponement of the strikers' cases.

THE TREACHERY OF THE A. F. OF L. BUREAUCRATS

During all these strikes, the A. F. of L. bureaucrats betrayed themselves as capitalist agents in the ranks of labor. The plain fact is that against their will they were swept into the wave of strikes. They were at all times against spreading the strikes. An illuminating example is the following: On April 24, the steel men of Republic struck. On this same day Mitch called a hasty meeting of the Sayreton coal mine local of Republic and forced the men back to work on the basis of General Johnson's April 22 order. The Party unit in the steel mill issued a leaflet calling on the coal and ore miners of Republic to strike with their brothers. The steel strikers marched on the Republic coal mine, and on April 27, after being at work only two days since the last strike, the Republic coal miners struck again. Mitch immediately issued a long statement to the press attacking the rank and file, especially the Communists, and further said:

> "Unfortunately in some mines which are under joint agreement with the U. M. W. of A., efforts have been made to stop the operations of some mines in what might be termed a sympathy strike. No good union man would stop an operation that is working under agreement, and I am warning the members of U. M. W. of A. that they are under obligation to keep the mines in operation."

In this way he once again forced the Republic coal miners back to work. Another brazen example was the action of President Webster of the Brighton Local of the Smelter Union, (Woodward Iron Company). All the ore miners had struck on May 4, and the Republic Steel men of the Smelter Local had already struck on April 24. This was the only local of the Smelters not on strike, and this reactionary company man at the head of the local declared that the steel workers at Woodward were well satisfied and would not join the strike of their 8,000 union brothers. It is interesting to note that only the other day this same Webster forced a resolution through his local which said:

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> "We are opposed to Communism, and will not accept the application of any man for membership who is tainted with its poison. We are convinced that anarchy in the so-called 'higher social strata' is the most prolific breeder of Communism among the ignorant, under-privileged class."

Obviously Mr. Webster does not consider himself a member of the under-privileged class. So brazen was the treachery of the bureaucracy that in the Washington Coal Code hearings, Forney Johnson, attorney for the operators, reminded Mitch that he had confidentially promised not to ask for a wage increase for the miners for one year at the time the coal strike had been settled in March. So much so that *The Birmingham Post* editorially declared:

> "In some cases it appears even where Mr. Mitch has sided with the operators on a disputed point, the miners have refused to listen to his orders."

In the laundry strike the Birmingham Trades Council issued a leaflet in which it stated:

> "The inside white workers are asking for a minimum wage of $12.50 per week. The colored inside workers are asking from 16⅔ to 35 cents an hour. Over 80 per cent of these colored employees come in the 16⅔ class."

Certainly this impudent piece of lying and treachery which says that the Negroes wanted half the wage of the white workers, is not easy to surpass. The A. F. of L. officialdom stood by the N.R.A. and its slave differential wage for the South. However, at the recent State convention, they were forced to adopt a resolution condemning the differential, particularly because the Party had raised the question of the fight against the differential as one of the most pressing struggles of the day. And broad masses were translating this slogan into life.

In their attitude toward the Negro masses the bureaucrats showed their ugly Jim-Crow role. They stood for lower wages for Negroes at all times during the strike period. When Ed England, Negro coal miner, was murdered in cold blood, Bill Mitch issued a statement placing the blame on the heroic miner, and white-washing the chief of police. After the I.L.D. spread leaflets in the mine fields demanding the conviction of the chief of police for murder and cash indemnity for England's family, Mitch issued another statement calling for a federal investigation. He praised the National Guard. At all times the A. F. of L. officialdom tried to hold back mass picketing. International Representative Huey

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even went so far as to tell the T.C.I. coal pickets, the second day of the strike, to go home, throw away their sticks and clubs, "because the strike is won". In some cases they even tried to set up Jim-Crow picket lines; but the white and Negro miners smashed this damnable plan. Wherever possible the bureaucrats kept Negroes from leadership in the union and the strike. The A. F. of L. officialdom went so far as to endorse Bibb Graves, Democratic candidate for Governor, known as one of the outstanding leaders of the K.K.K. in its hey-day, which he is now reviving in his present campaign. While the A. F. of L. officialdom used every effort to keep the white workers from solidarity with the Negroes, the Negro misleaders played the role of sowing distrust among the Negro masses against the white workers. The Negro preachers talked the strike down at all times. Negro reformist leaders of the Civic League and N.A.A.C.P. issued anonymous leaflets calling on the Negroes to leave the unions. While their obvious attempt was to smash the unions, they claimed that this was the way to fight Jim-Crowism. In the present steel situation the T.C.I. has already handed out a large sum of money to the Negro preachers who are doing all they can to prevent the coming steel strike.

However, the A. F. of L. officials outdid themselves in one more way, and that was their unprincipled and vicious attack on the Communist Party. One of the central points on the agenda at the State convention was how to fight Communism which was "rampant in Alabama." *The Birmingham Post* said editorially:

> "There are evidences that Communism is spreading its subversive doctrines in the ranks of our laboring people, despite the warning of labor leaders that Communist ideas are furthest removed from the principles of trade unionism."

The A. F. of L. officials even joined with the White Legion fascists in helping the authorities in their attempt to frame up Communist leaders on murder charges, in order to whitewash the murderous attack on the strikers by the Steel Trust deputies.

THE ROLE OF THE PARTY

It is very clear that the Party enjoys deep-going and wide sympathy, influence, and prestige among the masses of strikers. This was one reason for the frenzied attack against the Party by the ruling class and its sundry agents and agencies. The Party issued the slogans which came from the hearts of the masses. It explained the historic importance of the fight for union recognition and against the N.R.A. wage differential. It presented the urgent

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need for revolutionary strike leadership. It explained the need for rank-and-file control and leadership through elected strike committees. It called on the rank and file to go over the heads of their big officials. It urged the need for unity and solidarity among the white and Negro strikers, and called upon all workers to support the strikers. It urged the unemployed to join the picket lines and not to scab. It called on the strikers to demand the withdrawal of the National Guards. Many Communists were active in the strike leadership and on the picket lines. Only recently a rank-and-file delegation called on Governor Miller, demanding the withdrawal of the National Guards. Of course, the Governor refused. During every moment of the whole strike period which has lasted over three months, the Party has hammered away at the need for a solid fight on all fronts and for equal rights for Negroes. Dozens of examples testify that this crucial slogan found a sympathetic response also among the white strikers.

Despite all of the activity of the Party and its tremendous influence, we cannot be satisfied with our work. We must be frankly self critical, especially since the opportunities were so great. What were the main shortcomings in our work? First, while we issued correct slogans on the whole, without, however, sufficiently exposing the role of the reformists and especially the role of the N.R.A., we failed to prepare the organizational machinery to put our slogans into unified motion so as actually to consolidate rank-and-file groups in the locals. Our concentration policy was not concentrated enough. Instead of picking one or two key points, we picked nine mines and mills. It proved to be more than we could handle. At times our Party units and Sections did not recognize their role as leaders and fighters in the strike situation. We have about 75 Party members in the ore strike. Most of these are active, but not collectively, and not sufficiently through their mine units, and not at all through fraction work in the locals. Before the strike wave and even during the strike we did not sufficiently stress the development of local leaders as one of the pivotal questions. In the present ore strike, in one mining camp where we have 25 Party members, some of whom are local union leaders, we have temporarily lost contact with them because of the terror.

The amount of time and energy our leading comrades spend in developing these militant comrades will determine the role these comrades play in the strike. It is necessary to develop in advance conspirative methods of work, which our Party leadership failed to do. With the onrush of fascist development under the New Deal, failure to grapple with conspirative methods of work

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so that the Party can function during the most intense period of terror, is a crime against the Party and the instructions given us by the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. and the Eighth National Convention.

Most important of all, we failed to show simply and clearly the connection of the immediate struggle with our ultimate goal. That is why we did not recruit enough of the best strikers into the Party. What happened was that for a while the whole Party found itself swamped in the strike whirlpool, and we could not see beyond it. It is true that May Day came right in the midst of the strike struggles, and there was talk among the masses that May Day was the strikers' day. Ore miners came in trucks even from distances of twelve miles, to the May Day demonstration. Yet we did not sufficiently explain the connection between the struggle against the differential wage and the struggle of the share-croppers, and between the struggle for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys and the whole fight for the right to self-determination in the Black Belt. This, despite the fact that the share-croppers themselves were being moved into struggle by the great Birmingham strikes. To put it more precisely, we did not show how only the revolutionary struggle which is leading toward a Soviet America can win higher wages and union recognition now.

This problem was clearly put before the whole Party in the simplest and fullest fashion by the Eighth National Convention, and all of us must solve this problem in our work, because it is the key to building a mass Party of revolutionary fighters, forged in the present and impending strike struggles in the United States.

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For Improving the Work of the Party Among the Foreign-Born Workers

By F. BROWN

(*Speech Delivered at the Eighth Convention of the Communist Party of the U. S. A.*)

THE draft resolution submitted to the Eighth Party Convention dealing with the tasks of the Party, states:

> "The central task of the Party is to organize and lead the fight against the offensive of the capitalist class, against developing fascism, and the threat of imperialist war, and to develop these struggles, on the basis of the fight for the immediate partial demands of the workers, into general class battles for the overthrow of capitalist dictatorship and the setting up of a Soviet government. This requires a quickening of the tempo and improvement in the quality of the work of the Party, to fight for the *winning of the majority of the working class* by more quickly carrying through the decisions of the Open Letter with regard to *rooting the Party among the basic strata of the proletariat, in the most important industries and factories, through the application of the policy of concentration.*" (Emphasis mine—F.B.)

This is the central problem that we are discussing at this Convention. The solution of this central task depends on our ability to improve the quality of the work of the Party as the prerequisite for winning the majority of the working class. The key to the solution of this problem is given by the Open Letter; it is through the application of the policy of concentration that the Party will succeed in rooting itself among the basic strata of the proletariat and in so doing win the majority of the working class.

There is no doubt that we have made some headway since the policy of the Open Letter has been applied, that the policy of concentration has proven correct in practice. It is true, however, that something is lacking as regards the tempo and the quality of Party work. The task of this Convention, therefore, is to make the Party conscious of the necessity of speeding up. The effects of the N.R.A., as foreseen by our Party, are here. Large masses are in motion again. The old illusions in the N.R.A., in the role of the

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"Democratic" President, are crumbling one by one. The daily struggles of the C.W.A. workers, of the unemployed, are struggles against the N.R.A.

The moment that we seriously approach the problem of rooting the Party among the basic strata of the proletariat, we cannot ignore one of the questions with which I want to deal specifically.

While the draft resolution states correctly that the key to the building of the Party is "the rooting of the Party in the factories and in the most important industries, winning especially the native white and Negro workers", we cannot ignore the role of the foreign-born masses, especially in the basic industries where they still constitute a majority.

THE FOREIGN-BORN TOILERS A REVOLUTIONARY FACTOR

The foreign-born masses are undergoing rapid radicalization. Millions of them are unemployed. They are discriminated against in the industries and by the relief agencies; they are persecuted and deported. Furthermore, with the aid of the foreign-born petty bourgeoisie, the ruling class is trying to keep the foreign-born workers under the influence of its ideology. Today all reactionary forces among the foreign-born masses are mobilized to check their rapid radicalization. The foreign-born workers are today fighting shoulder to shoulder with their native white and Negro brothers in the industries, in front of the relief stations, on the C.W.A. jobs; they are awakened to the consciousness of being part and parcel of the American working class. We see, therefore, that the foreign-born workers constitute a revolutionary factor of the utmost importance. The winning over of the foreign-born masses depends on our ability to apply the policy of concentration and to speed up the tempo along the line of the Open Letter.

At the Extraordinary Party Conference we laid the emphasis on the following tasks:

1. To orientate the foreign-born workers under Party influence towards winning their fellow workers in the factories on the basis of their immediate needs;

2. To apply more energetically the united front tactic to win over the masses of foreign-born workers organized in the hundreds of organizations under the reactionary leadership, on the basis of the struggle for unemployment and social insurance, against discrimination and deportations, against fascism and war.

This was a step forward in comparison with the decisions of the Seventh Convention. At that time, in outlining the task of the Party among the foreign-born masses, we were guided by the

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general aim of the Party to win the majority of the workers for the revolutionary class struggle. Yet, at that time we were concerned especially with the struggle against the Right tendencies in the mass organizations around the Party, with the struggle against specific forms of nationalism and chauvinism which manifested themselves, with the struggle against federationist tendencies, etc. We were struggling to bring them closer to the Party and make of them instruments, not of separating the foreign-born working masses from one another and from the native workers, but of drawing them together by developing their revolutionary consciousness. It was at this time that we defined the task of the language fractions to make of them the driving force of the language mass organizations under the Party influence.

THE PERIOD OF CONSOLIDATION

The period between the Seventh Convention and the Extraordinary Party Conference can be characterized as a period of consolidation of the forces under the Party influence among the foreign-born workers, a period in which the Party was victorious over the past strong tendencies of federationism, a period in which we succeeded in consolidating the forces around the Party and started to move forward by making these forces a factor for penetration, for winning new strata of foreign-born workers.

Since the Extraordinary Party Conference, we have moved a little faster; but we are still behind schedule, behind the radicalization of these masses which has expressed itself in their daily struggles, in their rebellion against the nationalists; we are still behind the tempo of the fascist agents in their efforts to check this movement.

Let me present here, a few figures that indicate the tempo of growth of the language mass organizations and language press between the two Conventions and especially since the time of the Open Letter. The approximate membership in the language mass organizations under Party influence, including the Language Sections of the International Workers Order, was:

1930—48,000
1933—123,000 (Extraordinary Party Conference)
1934—133,000

The number of Party members in these organizations:

1933—5,000
1934—7,000

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The approximate number of readers of the daily and weekly language press (exclusive of magazines and reviews):

1930—110,000
1933—127,000
1934—142,000

Gains in building the opposition inside the language organizations still under the control of the reactionaries were made especially by the Armenian, Slovak, Roumanian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Hungarian, and, to some extent, by the Polish and Italian comrades.

For example, in the past year the Slovak comrades have succeeded in gaining influence among the thousands of members of the Slovak national organizations. The Roumanian comrades have also made splendid headway.

From the figures, it is evident that the language organizations have not only consolidated their position in the last few years, but that since the Open Letter they have registered some real gains.

From approximately 50,000 members in 1930 we have reached a total of 130,000 in 1934. We have a gain of over 10,000 since the Open Letter. Furthermore, since the Open Letter, through the activities of the fractions, more than 2,000 members of these organizations were recruited into the Party.

It is important to note the headway made, especially in the building of the Polish Chamber of Labor, in the building of a whole series of Greek, Italian and Jugoslav workers' clubs, which shows the big possibilities in this field. We should especially note the big gains made by the International Workers Order since last year.

With the exception of the *Freiheit* (Yiddish) and the Finnish press, there are real gains to be registered, especially in the Greek, Ukrainian, Italian and Chinese papers. In the other languages, such as the Jugoslav, Hungarian, Polish and Slovak, the press is more consolidated, with gains to show. The new weekly and monthly subscriptions are increased. In the last few years, the whole language press has improved, not only politically, but also technically and financially. In spite of the crisis, all of the papers are today on a much sounder financial basis. Thousands of the old expired subscriptions were discontinued or renewed and new thousands made. The gains since the Open Letter speak for themselves. (The language press was instrumental in the consolidation and growth of the language mass organizations and the International Workers Order, and in drawing the mass organizations into all Party campaigns.) However, the gains of the language press are not in step with the growth of the mass organizations.

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HOW THE PARTY REACTED TO THE OPEN LETTER IN THE LANGUAGE FIELD

From the reports made by the language buros of the Central Committee we can see that practically all organizations have started to use the connections in the shops and in the organizations to build the revolutionary unions and the opposition in the American Federation of Labor as well as to organize the youth and children.

From the report of the Czechoslovakian Buro we read:

> "Our main task and activities were and will be to build a united front for social and unemployment insurance as well as against war and fascism. In the National Slovak Society we succeeded in building an opposition group for the special convention of the National Slovak Society, and sent rank-and-file members to represent the branches. We also succeeded in the election of new officers to the National Office with a few rank-and-file delegates elected. In Newark, N. J., members of the I. W. O. fraction, under the guidance of the Party, were instrumental in building a Leather Workers Industrial Union. In Salem, Ohio, the Slovak fraction in the Sanitary Company was instrumental in building a union. In Chicago great help was given by the Slovak fractions in building the Furniture Workers Industrial Union and the opposition in the A. F. of L. bakery union. Other cities are following in these steps, increasing their activities along the line laid down by the Extraordinary Conference."

From the reports of the Scandinavian Buro we read:

> "Correctly orientated along the line of the decisions of the Extraordinary Party Conference, the Scandinavian Workers Clubs in Jamestown were instrumental in helping the forces of the Party to draw 1,000 members into the revolutionary unions. In Rockford, Ill., our club is also working to organize the workers. This can also be said of Worcester, Mass. These places are mentioned especially because we have there a large number of Scandinavian workers and a weak Party organization. Otherwise all our organizations are taking part in the general activities for the organization of workers into the trade unions."

The Greek Buro tells of the work "of some of the Greek clubs as instruments in helping to build the revolutionary unions, in helping to organize the unorganized Greek workers in the various industries . . . "

From the reports it is evident that all mass organizations are participating in practically all the campaigns of the Party, that they have contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to the movement, and that real efforts are being made to penetrate the organizations led by the reactionaries. Still, we are far from getting the results that we could and should get in building new workers' clubs, new workers' centers able to lead the struggles of the masses in their

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neighborhoods and be instrumental in building the revolutionary unions and the unemployed organizations.

With little effort the Italian comrades, in the course of one year, succeeded in building many workers' clubs and today face the problem of uniting them into a federation. But while the members of some of these clubs were instrumental in organizing C.W.A. workers, as is the case of the Italian Club on the West Side of New York, while they developed the first strike of the C.W.A. workers at Bear Mountain bridge, the fractions in the clubs and the Italian Buro itself are lagging behind.

In the report of the Italian Buro we read:

> "We have not yet learned to be systematic in our work, with the result that, with the exception of the International Workers Order branches, our clubs, etc., are growing in number, but, generally speaking, are far from developing into mass organizations embracing thousands of workers. This fact is important, since it shows better than anything else the gulf between the process of radicalization of the Italian masses and our conscious effort to guide this process and crystalize it in organizational results. Workers' clubs are springing up daily, often spontaneously."

What does this show? It shows that the Italian comrades are not yet conscious of their task of mobilizing and organizing the Italian masses, especially of penetrating the large mutual-aid organizations under fascist leadership. The fact that *L'Unita Operaia* doubled its circulation in one year shows that the masses are moving faster than our Italian comrades.

From the report of the Lithuanian Buro we read:

> "It seems to us that no serious attempt is being made on the part of the revolutionary unions to use the mass organizations and their valuable contacts. The membership of these organizations is 95 per cent composed of workers mainly of the heavy industries—coal and steel. On our part also there were no serious attempts made for involving these mass organizations in the formation of the trade unions. This situation must be remedied. In every city the Party committees should make it their task to guide the fractions in the mass organizations, to get contacts and involve the mass organizations in the struggle for revolutionary unionism."

Here again we see that the line of the Open Letter is not applied sufficiently, that with coordination of the work between the language buros and the local Party committees, through improving the press, our results could be a hundred-fold greater.

From the reports it is clear that real results were achieved in those language fields where not only the language buros, but also the District and Section Committees, have carried out the line of the Party in the language work. On the other hand, where the line of

democracy

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the Open Letter was not applied energetically by the language buros, especially by the local Party committees, there the results are not only nill, but the old nationalist, federationist tendencies, which we were successful in smashing previously, have raised their head again. For instance, it is very interesting that at the Extraordinary Party Conference we took Youngstown as an example to prove what can be done by correct application of the Party line in the mass organizations. We pointed out that in Youngstown, or in any small industrial town of the East, national composition of the foreign-born workers in the mills, factories, etc., reflects to a great extent the composition of the mass organizations of the foreign-born workers. While in the factories these workers are united, their national organizations divide them. Furthermore, we show how through a correct utilization of the mass organizations in such towns as Youngstown this can become instrumental in the organization of the workers into the revolutionary trade unions. But what was the situation in Youngstown till a few months ago? Comrade John Roman in a pre-Convention article states:

> "But why the isolation? Is it because we don't do work? No. Primarily because we go at it in the wrong way, *because of our failure to link up our activities in the language field with the basic tasks of the Party.* Do our language forces in the Youngstown Section properly participate or engage in systematic work in the factories, among the steel workers, on C.W.A. jobs? Are they doing work among the unemployed? Are they working systematically in the reactionary organizations, where the great masses of indifferent, misled workers are left to the mercy of the reactionaries, the fascists? National experiences on the language field show that where this was done, the isolation of our language movement began to disappear, and new masses began to flock toward us . . .
>
> "There is complete lack of understanding of this on the language field in the Youngstown Section.
>
> "There is a very low level of political understanding, irregular attendance and participation in the so-called general Party work, a shrinking from any activity that is not within the narrow shell of 'society doings'. Their activities in the main are those of the old line of federationalism—that is, limited to associating with their old friends, seeing the same faces year in year out, having a dance and lecture here and there and, of course, giving financial support to their language press.
>
> "Needless to say, in a Section where the overwhelming majority of the basic proletariat is foreign-speaking, where almost the whole Section membership is that of the 'language forces', such a situation as that in Youngstown is more than intolerable."

In an industrial town, like Youngstown, where the majority of the steel workers are foreign-born and the overwhelming majority of the population is composed of steel workers and their families,

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where the mass organizations are reduced to "society doings" in the midst of unemployment and wage-cuts, instead of being the lever for building the revolutionary union, such a situation is the result of the lack of carrying on the Party line in this field of work, is the result of a lack of understanding of this problem by the local Party committees.*

THE ROLE OF LEADING COMMITTEES AND FRACTIONS—THE WEAKNESS IN THE APPLICATION OF THE UNITED FRONT TACTIC

The general weakness which must be overcome by the Party in this field of work, is to establish the responsibility of the leading local Party committees for the application of the Party line through the fractions in the mass organizations.

While in the past year, and practically since the Seventh Convention, we have to register an improvement in the functioning of the leading fractions in the mass organizations, of the language buros, the fractions in the branches are not functioning politically, they do not fight for the Party line in reaching the masses in the factories. The primary reason is the weak understanding of the role of the fraction, the fact that the Party members inside these organizations are not guided in their work by the District and Section Committees, that the activities of the fractions are not checked by the local Party committees. The line of the Party is simply given by the language buros or by the leading fractions, and this is taken up by the members themselves.

This shows the good reaction of the masses, but it also shows the weak understanding of the fraction, that it is the fraction in the branch or club that must be the driving force for the concretization of the line into practice. The struggle for the united front in the language field proves the correctness of this statement. It is noticeable how some of the language fractions or groups of Party members, in applying the united front policy correctly, were able to organize thousands of workers in opposition to the reactionary leadership in their organizations. On the other hand, where the work of the fractions in the mass organizations is weak, we missed great opportunities of reaching wide masses of workers. This is the case especially with the German and Jewish fractions. Among the German and Jewish masses we lost a splendid opportunity to build a mass movement on the basis of struggle against German fascism and for the defeat of the social-fascists. In this respect we must

* Today, with a correct orientation by the Section Committee as well as in the language field, we notice, in Youngstown, a complete change.

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state that our Jewish organizations, especially the *Freiheit*, did not energetically struggle for the united front policy, for winning over large strata of the Jewish masses, that it did not sufficiently take the offensive against the *Forward* and the social-fascists. This is also one of the reasons that the *Freiheit* did not keep up the tempo of growth of other language organs of our Party. The same can be said of the German organizations and *Der Arbeiter*, and more or less of all mass organizations and the language press.

Another phase of our language work in which the weakness of the fractions manifests itself: While in the last few years we stressed continuously the necessity of building the mass organizations around the Party on the basis of their own program, and the necessity to participate in the campaigns of the Party, today we can notice some tendencies of an exaggerated independence which, if not checked, will result in a drifting away from the various campaigns of the Party. While there is no doubt that in the last year the International Workers Order, for example, made splendid progress, that it succeeded in recruiting 16,000 new members from October to January, in many instances, however, many workers were recruited more on the basis of insurance than on the basis of the program of the I.W.O. which combines the program of insurance with the program of class struggle. It is noticeable that in the recruiting drive of the I.W.O. the leading committees and the language press played the primary role, while the fractions in the branches did not respond as well as the non-Party members. This is because Party members inside the I.W.O. are not clear on the task of the fractions and in many instances because of the lack of enlightenment by the District and Section Committees on their role, on the importance of the I.W.O., not only as a mass organization based on the program of class struggle, but as an organization that has to be built as the trench of the revolutionary unions. There is no doubt in my mind that in Ambridge, for example, at the time of the strike, if the steel workers had been organized into the I.W.O., the masses would have still been united and organized in a class struggle organization, in spite of the smashing of the union by the bosses and government. The fact that the Communist vote ran into the hundreds in spite of the terror in the municipal election, shows clearly the role of the mass organizations around the Party. In general, the Party members inside the mass organizations do not see the importance of fraction work, not only to check the danger of an exaggerated independence on the part of the mass organizations in drifting away from the various Party campaigns which is the first step towards drifting away from the Party line, but also

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because of the importance of the fractions in the perspective of growing reaction and illegality.

It is especially in such a period that the fractions become the Party organizations that remain strongly connected with the masses.

Today the mass organizations under the leadership of the reactionary forces are becoming instrumental in helping the Roosevelt Administration in putting through his program of fascization. This is more than evident from the activities of the various fascist agents in this country, from the role of the foreign bourgeois press.

OUR MAIN TASKS IN THE FOREIGN-LANGUAGE FIELD

We cannot be satisfied with our gains of the past year. *We have to forge the language mass organizations around the Party into more powerful instruments* for reaching the wide masses of foreign-born, for taking the lead among the foreign-born masses in the struggle against fascism and war, against social-fascism. *They must be instrumental in uniting the foreign-born with the rest of the American working class in the struggle against* the effects of the N.R.A., which means they must be forged into instruments, into levers, for building the revolutionary unions, for building the opposition in the American Federation of Labor, into instruments for reaching the masses in the factories, in the mines; *they must develop the struggle against discrimination, against deportation; they must especially* penetrate the masses of the organizations led by the reactionary forces through applying the united front policy on all the immediate demands that concern the foreign-born workers. In this respect, the foreign-language press, as stated in the draft resolution, must be extended, popularized, and become mass organs for combatting national separation. *They must fight against fascist propaganda carried on by the American fascists and those of European countries and be a means of drawing the foreign-born workers into the main stream of the class struggle, into the Communist Party and the mass organizations, particularly the trade unions.* There must be a wider issuance and circulation of literature on current political problems and propaganda pamphlets dealing with the revolutionary way out of the crisis. In this respect the example of the Jewish Buro which since the Open Letter has issued some 15 pamphlets in about 100,000 copies, and of the Ukrainian Buro which has issued pamphlets in 55,000 copies, must be followed by the language buros and mass organizations.

Since the Seventh Party Convention we have laid emphasis on the necessity of penetrating especially among the Polish, Italian,

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German, Jugoslav and Spanish-speaking masses. Yet we have moved very slowly. Very few forces have been developed in these language fields. In this respect one of the major tasks in the language field is the intensification of the struggle against the increased activities of the German, Italian, Jugoslav, and Polish fascists and the mobilization of all forces under our influence for the penetration and organization of the workers in those language fields.

Furthermore, *we must seriously tackle the problem of winning the large masses of Spanish-speaking workers that are moving* very fast, that, especially in the Southwest, are crying for Communist literature, for Communist organizers. Since the Open Letter, through the application of the Party line in the youth field, the mass organizations were able to build youth sections with over 5,000 members, which shows that organizations of foreign-born workers can be instrumental in reaching the American youth. This line not only has to be followed, *but the activities of the mass organizations in this direction must be intensified to the utmost.* To accelerate the process, more workers' clubs have to be built. More energy must be given to building the I.W.O. and the rest of the mass organizations, and to building the circulation of the Party press. And above all, the fractions must be made conscious of their role.

Around the Party there are today mass organizations embracing over 500,000 organized workers, not taking into consideration the Left-Wing forces in the A. F. of L. unions, the farmers' organizations, the various cultural organizations, etc. These organizations can and must become powerful instruments for mobilizing and organizing the large masses of American toilers; they must become levers in the hand of the Party for winning the majority of the working class. In this respect the language mass organizations must become the levers for moving the foreign-born masses to march shoulder to shoulder with their exploited brothers, the native Negro and white workers, in the class battles along the road of the working class way out of the crisis, along the road to Soviet America.

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Check-Up on Control Tasks in the Chicago District

By BILL GEBERT

> "After the correct line has been given, after a correct solution of the problem has been found, success depends on the organization of the manner in which the work is organized, on the organization of the struggle for the application of the line of the Party, on the proper selection of workers, on supervising the fulfillment of the decisions of the leading organs." (*Stalin Reports* to the Seventeenth Congress, Communist Party of the Soviet Union, page 82.)*

THE correctness of the Resolutions of the Eighth Convention of the Communist Party has already been tested in the developing class conflicts (Toledo, Minneapolis, Buffalo, Alabama, the Illinois coal fields, the longshoremen's strikes, etc.). The decisions of our Convention have not only been adopted in full accord, but the whole Convention fully understood their meaning. The problem therefore remains mainly the organization of the Party's work to carry out these decisions in practice. Naturally, one cannot assume that the whole Party membership fully understands the Resolutions. There are sections of the membership that have yet to be mobilized. The political mobilization of the Party membership for the execution of the decisions must be concretely applied to the work in the concentration points. Without this, our resolutions again are in danger of remaining on paper. The struggle for the Party line is, in fact, not only a struggle within the Party, but must be carried among the masses to win the workers for the Party line. This cannot be done without full clarification on the Party Resolutions in the Party ranks. Comrade Browder in his summary at the Convention, declared:

> "We must have a perpetual and continually renewing self-examination of our work, a searching out of every weak point and finding the way to remedy it." **

Let us begin with the following quotation from the Resolution:

> "Improvement of the inner life of the Party and turning its

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* International Publishers, 10 cents.

** *Report to the Eighth Convention, Communist Party*, by Earl Browder, p. 126. Workers Library Publishers, 10 cents.

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face to the mass struggles is a burning necessity, to which all leading organs must give their fullest attention, establishing direct personal contact with the Party units and lower Party organizations."

This task, as set by the Convention, is especially important, since in the recent elections in the Party, many new workers have been promoted into leadership, who do not fully understand how to organize the work, and without guidance of the leading cadres (members of the Central and District Committees) the work will not improve. It is in this light that we want to examine the control tasks for the concentration points in the Chicago District.

Immediately after the District Convention, at which the new District Committee and Buro were elected, the leading members of the District Committee were given definite responsibilities in mass work. A comrade was assigned to work in the stock yards, another in steel, a third in the A. F. of L., and so on. These comrades were not assigned for the purpose of replacing the committees and Party organizations and fractions in these points of concentration, but to work with them, to guide the work, "to really assist the comrades working there to solve the difficult problems and overcome all obstacles".

EXAMINING THE MAJOR POINTS OF CONCENTRATION

It is in line with this that we wish to examine the work at the major points of concentration. The stock yards in Chicago represent the weakest link in the work of our Party. The District Convention instructed the District Committee to examine thoroughly why this is so, to find the reasons, and overcome them. An examination of the work at the stock yards disclosed first of all that the work was not organized, although a member of the District Buro, prior to the District Convention, had been assigned to work with the comrades. In spite of the fact that nearly 25 members of the Party are working in the yards, these members were not organized. No functioning shop nuclei were established. There were not only no fractions in the union, but absolutely no contacts and no Party members inside of the unions of the A. F. of L. or the Stockyards Labor Council. The building of the Packing House Workers Industrial Union was not undertaken in such a manner as really to build it. The union never functioned as a trade union organization and its membership did not extend beyond some Party members and very close sympathizers.

When a meeting of the Party members in the yards was called to bring the decisions of the Convention to them, five members came to the meeting. So instead of discussing the decisions of the

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Convention, we took up the question of why other members did not come and how to bring the others to the meetings. As a result, at the next meeting, we had 17 comrades. Then, after carefully examining the whole situation in the yards, every Party member was assigned a definite task.

IMPROVEMENTS TO BE NOTED

The first decision was that every member of the Party must become a member of a union. Definite assignments were given to comrades to become members of unions of the Stockyards Labor Council, Packing House Workers Industrial Union, and of the A. F. of L. While before the Convention we had no contact with the organized workers in the yards, today some of the leading members of our Party are members of unions. (We actually had union organizers who were not members of a union.) Today, not only the union organizers are members, but the Section Organizer of the Party is an active union member.

The result of this activity is that we have been able to develop strong sentiment among the members of the Stockyards Labor Council for amalgamation with the Packing House Workers Industrial Union, and at the same time have strengthened to some extent the Packing House Workers Industrial Union. By no means have we solved the basic problems. We have made no real inroads among the stock yards workers. But we have made a beginning toward that end. Side by side with this we are developing activities concretely exposing the role of the treacherous leaders of the A. F. of L.; the fakery of Martin Murphy, self-appointed leader of the Stockyards Labor Council.

Our description will not be complete unless we add that the Party has at the same time given assistance to the Y.C.L. We have now two units of the Y.C.L. in the yards. The first bulletin of the Y.C.L. has been published. Two new shop nuclei of the Party have been built. We can very definitely say here that what we began to do now could have been done a year ago, or even before, if we had assigned to the work comrades who actually understood the problems and helped solve them, and above all, if we had organized the Party forces in the yards for every concrete task that confronts the workers.

Because of the proper application of the united front policy we can register some progress in preparation for a strike in the Calumet Steel Valley region. Two hundred and thirty-nine delegates came to the Anti-Company Union Conference. Every steel mill in the region was represented. For the first time we had members of the A.A.

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at the Conference. The bulk of the delegates were unorganized workers. It is true that this conference did not represent the decisive section of the steel workers, but it made contact with that section. With good activity, it will be possible really to develop work toward building a mass Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union as well as opposition work inside of the A. F. of L. and the building of the Party.

The first steps in establishing contacts and developing organization among the railroad workers have been made. This organizational work was, however, too slow. It did not receive so much attention as did the organization of the steel workers.

Work among the marine workers had been entirely neglected in the past. Now some work has been developed as a result of mass activities. Ten marine workers have been recruited into the Party.

Work in the A. F. of L. has been strengthened, especially around the issue of the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill (H.R. 7598). The support given this campaign indicates that if the vote had been counted at the conference called by the Chicago Federation of Labor, H.R. 7598 would have been carried at the Conference. The officialdom was afraid to take a vote by a show of hands, and in voting "aye" and "no" they were able to declare the carrying of the Wagner Bill; for in reality it was defeated.

In the mining field no appreciable progress has been made since the Convention in further penetrating the unions of the Progressive Miners of America and the United Mine Workers of America. But development of activity among the unemployed, with 20,000 registered members now in the Unemployment Councils downstate, shows very definitely the growth of the movement as a result of militant struggles led by the Unemployment Councils.

In the city of Chicago the work among the unemployed, although a little improved, is still unsatisfactory. The Conference on June 9 was called to intensify the activity for the organization of workers in struggle for the demands and issues of the unemployed, especially around H.R. 7598.

All these are indications of some attempts to improve the work of the Chicago District after the Convention. But all work, in spite of this little progress, is lagging behind. We are not taking full advantage of the opportunities which present themselves in our District. The reasons for this are:

MAIN REASONS FOR THE WEAKNESSES

(a) Still insufficient leadership and guidance on the part of the District Committee members to the most important factory nuclei and fractions in the trade unions.

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(b) Tendencies of underestimation, neglect, and resistance towards work inside of the reformist trade unions, which are combined with legalistic tendencies and opportunism as well as with the failure to concretize the struggle against social-fascism.

(c) Tendencies of "departmentalization", that is, comrades working in different mass organizations, revolutionary and reformist trade unions and language, Negro and other organizations, do not combine their activity with the major tasks confronting the Party. They are too much occupied solely with the specific problems confronting their mass organizations. This is a swing of the pendulum from what we had some time in the past, namely, so-called "general" activities, to narrow practicalism, which hampers the unification of activities and struggles such as the campaign for freeing Thaelmann or for the freedom of Poindexter and the Illinois miners arrested and sentenced to years in prison. In the case of the struggle for Unemployment Insurance, or against war, it is necessary to bring home to the comrades that these are the problems of the movement as a whole, not of special sections and special "organizations" which are to specialize in conducting such campaigns. This is especially true in regard to the question of building trade unions of the T.U.U.L. and developing opposition movements inside of the A. F. of L. and Railroad Brotherhoods.

Here we have the situation where at least 20,000 workers in the mass organizations around the Party, working under the guidance and leadership of the Communist fractions, are not brought into the trade unions, and those who are in the trade unions are not organized in the opposition groups, precisely because the fractions in the mass organizations, such as I.W.O., I.L.D., L.S.N.R., language organizations, workers' clubs, etc., do not feel it their task to bring these workers into the revolutionary trade union movement, that is, into the unions of the T.U.U.L. or into the opposition movement inside of the A. F. of L. and Railroad Brotherhoods. This is not their problem, they feel, this is the problem of the "Party apparatus". They don't fully realize that they, as Party members, and not some "Party apparatus", are first of all responsible for the unionization of the Party membership and close sympathizers around the Party in the unions.

Likewise, our Party members are not the driving forces inside of the shops for building trade unions of the T.U.U.L. nor the driving force in developing opposition movements in the A. F. of L. There is passivity in this respect. Here is where an ideological struggle is necessary as well as the coordination of the work carried on by the units, Section Committees, fractions, under the guidance

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of the District Committee. Without this our tasks for developing a mass revoluionary trade union movement in the Chicago District will remain on paper.

WORK AMONG THE YOUTH

In addition, I want to raise the question of the work among the youth. Some sections of the Party membership and some Section Committees display a better appreciation of the importance of building the Y.C.L. and work of the Party among the young workers. Here and there some young Party members have been released for work in the Y.C.L. But on the whole our major task of building the Y.C.L. in the factories remains very unsatisfactory, especially in steel, where up till today we have not a single Y.C.L. shop nucleus. Nor is there a serious approach on the part of the unions of the T.U.U.L. and the opposition movement of the A. F. of L. to draw young workers into trade union activities. This represents an immense problem; and if we are to fulfill the task set by the National and District Conventions, there must be a definite change toward work among the young workers. This problem is, first of all, the problem of the shop and street units of the Party, but it cannot be confined only to the Party organization. Communist fractions inside of the trade unions, all kinds of mass organizations in every phase of their activity, must take steps to reach young workers and organize them.

Naturally, there are many other problems. I will not attempt to discuss them in this article.

THE NEED FOR REALIZING THE ROLE OF OUR LITERATURE

The last question we want to deal with is the question of the *Daily Worker* and literature. In the ranks of our Party, and in the mass organizations in particular, there is no appreciation of the meaning of working class literature and the *Daily Worker*. That question is always forgotten. I will cite a recent scandalous example. Nearly 400 steel workers were at the United Front Anti-Company Union Conference in Indiana Harbor, yet we did not have there a single copy of he *Daily Worker* or a single pamphlet. This is not the first time that we have such a situation. We can give many other such examples of criminal neglect of the Party press and literature. The reasons are that the Section and fractions in mass organizations, unions, etc., do not appreciate literature as an important instrument in the struggle of winning the masses for Communism. There are some tendencies of not bringing the literature and *Daily Worker* because this might "scare" the work-

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ers. Against this tendency the most bitter war has to be carried on if we are to make a change and, above all, if we are to carry out the decisions which have been made to triple the circulation of the *Daily Worker* in the Chicago District.

The recruiting and building of the Party in our District is very unsatisfactory. There is a decline in the number of workers recruited, although there is some improvement in the composition of the recruiting.

The dues payments are not increasing. While for the first three months of 1934 the average dues payments (excluding St. Louis) were 2,821, for the month of April they declined to 2,633, while in May the figure was 2,907. And this after recruiting 197 in April and 160 in May. This fluctuation is alarming and shows that our units do not improve the work of holding workers who have already joined the Party.

There is no short-cut to overcome this. The problem lies in better leadership in the units, Sections, and fractions, sensitiveness to the need of building the Party by the fractions in mass organizations, better organization of our control and execution of decisions. In short, as Comrade Browder stated at the Seventeenth Plenum of the Central Committee:

> "The struggle for the building of the Party is the struggle for the leadership of the mass movement, the struggle for the line of the Party among the masses; and that means also planned work, concentration work, Party discipline, the development of the activity of the Party, the bringing of the mass of our Party members into the trade unions, where they are not yet. Most of them are not yet in the trade unions, are not yet even in the Unemployment Councils. It means making every Communist a leader of non-Party masses. You cannot recruit workers into the Party until you have some degree of leadership over them, and the weakness of our Party recruiting, the weakness of the mass work of each individual member of the Party is the work of our leading committees, Sections, fractions and Districts, and we cannot separate this problem."

It is only through searching for every weakness and mistake, it is only through the ability of applying methods of corrective self-criticism, through the exposure of every weakness and mistake, and through the sharpest struggle against any tendencies of bureaucracy, that these things can be overcome. To solve the problems of the work of the shop and street nuclei, and of the fractions in mass organizations, we must bring to bear the decisions of the Eighth Convention of our Party.

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The I.L.D. Faces the Future

By WILLIAM L. PATTERSON

BY the time this article appears in print, the ninth anniversary of the International Labor Defense will have been celebrated. In cities stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts, from the Canadian to the Mexican borders and the Gulf coast, the history of the I.L.D. will have been dealt with in hundreds of anniversary meetings. These meetings will have indicated the widespread influence of the I.L.D. in linking up current struggles of local, national and international scope, and bringing forth concretely the I.L.D.'s relation to these, and still further deepen that influence. They will record the achievements and the shortcomings of the I.L.D. throughout a period of nine years of continuous activity.

Therefore, it is unnecessary to examine closely the major events around which the I.L.D. has, in the past, engaged in struggles, so as to aid in reaching conclusions regarding the tasks ahead and the possibilities for accomplishing these tasks. Also, it will of course be necessary to deal with past events in such a manner as to show the inseparable relation of the growth and development of the I.L.D. to that of the revolutionary movement as a whole, particularly to that of the leadership of the revolutionary movement, the Communist Party.

The I.L.D. is one of a number of class struggle organizations of the working class. A division of labor has been established within the working class, with a definite assignment of tasks. But there exists no Chinese wall between these organizations. Their work interlocks, like the fingers of clasped hands. The policies of the I.L.D. are based upon the class struggle, and its program is a program of class against class. It must be obvious that only the vanguard of the working class, the Communist Party, which guides and coordinates the activities of the class struggle organizations, guarantees consistency to such a policy and such a program.

Due to the unevenness of the development of class struggles, one front may be a relatively quiet sector, while another is desperately engaged in struggle. Every effort must be made, however, at such a time, to galvanize into action the first sectors in support of the activities on the militant struggle front.

Behind this battlefront, there are numerous organizations which

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assume at times a sympathetic and even helpful attitude. They participate under certain circumstances, and at certain moments, in one or another of the campaigns of the class-struggle organizations. But they are not necessarily organizations of the working class.

THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

For example, there is the American Civil Liberties Union. I speak of it because of its relation to the I.L.D. It has rendered extremely valuable assistance to the I.L.D. in many of our struggles. The I.L.D. has accepted, and under certain conditions, will continue to accept this assistance. Nonetheless, the leadership of the A.C.L.U. demands, in the name of "civil liberties", that the agents of Hitler be allowed freely and openly to propagate here the fascist program of brutal reaction, of murder, race hatred, degradation of womanhood, and of imperialist war.

This the A.C.L.U. leadership has done in the name of a struggle for civil liberties. The question of civil liberties *for whom?*—is negated. The class essence of civil liberties is completely obscured. The term becomes abstract, hence, meaningless. The result is that a membership which may be desirous of fighting for civil liberties for those to whom they are denied, finds itself fighting in the interest of those who deny civil liberties to the masses. From the standpoint of its class character, the A.C.L.U. is clearly distinguishable from the I.L.D. Certainly an attitude such as it assumes can have nothing in common with that of a working class struggle organization. The role of the leadership of such organizations as the A.C.L.U. is to create confusion and thus retard the development of class consciousness.

FACING TWO MAIN PROBLEMS

If it is true that only the leadership of the Communist Party can guarantee for the class struggle organizations a consistently revolutionary program, the weaknesses of these organizations must to a great degree reflect the weaknesses of that leadership. I shall deal with this question from two standpoints: coordinating the campaigns and gaining powerful allies. I shall treat of these two issues from the standpoint of their peculiar significance to the I.L.D.

There is no attempt here to escape from, or gloss over, the indisputable fact that the Communists within the I.L.D. represent the Party within the I.L.D. It therefore becomes their revolutionary duty to call to the attention of the Party the weaknesses of the I.L.D. This is by no means the limit of their revolutionary obligation in this respect. It is their duty to analyze these weaknesses and

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to propose to the Party concrete methods for remedying them. The analysis and the remedial measures are, of course, to be worked out in cooperation with the leading cadres of the Party itself.

The tasks of the I.L.D. arise from the activities of the other class struggle organizations and from the struggles of the Communist Party. Its tasks arise also out of the struggles of the toiling, though non-proletarian, masses in the city and the country-side against ruling-class oppression.

It is an axiom that the greater the terror to which the exploiting class resorts to smash the struggles for liberation, the louder does it speak of the necessity to maintain "law and order" and to "administer justice". The murder of starving men, women and children, seeking relief, is justified to maintain "law and order". The slaughter of innocent men, seeking to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed rights, to picket, to strike, to organize in an organization of their own choice, for the freedom of assemblage and the freedom of the press, is justified in the same manner. Under the term, "the necessity to maintain law and order" a justification is found for the terror provoked against the emancipatory struggles of the Negro people against its class and national oppression. In this latter instance, of course, the incitement to violence is further justified by the ruling class on the basis of the alleged inferiority of the Negro people. The historic task of the I.L.D. is to lead the struggle against ruling class terror everywhere. The more intense the class struggle, the more savage and bloody, the more murderous the terror of the ruling class, the more does it endeavor to cloak this program of terror behind a curtain of legality and the more desperate must be the efforts of the I.L.D. to tear away this curtain. There is no other means by which the ruling class can maintain the illusions of impartial democracy and secure the sanction of its courts to its program of terror and violence. When it moves away from the protection provided by this curtain, the illusions of justice and democracy are soon dispelled from the eyes of the workers. It therefore will not move away or desert the field of parliamentarianism until the sharpness of the class struggle forces it to disregard its so-called institutions of democracy and justice.

The injunction, though depriving the working class and non-proletarian masses of the constitutional right to picket, even of the right to strike, becomes an "impartial expression of democracy and justice", according to the courts. The nullification of civil rights and the introduction of martial law, as in the miners' strike in Gallup, New Mexico, is fitted into the circumferences of their elastic

, which the ruling class says stands above the

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class struggle. The covering statement is issued, that these forms of restricting workers' rights, are for the "public" welfare. State and federal authorities, State and federal courts, the police and armed forces of the Government, the hired thugs of the employers, in "the interest of public welfare", move with the blessings of church and press against the welfare of the working class and toiling masses. There is almost perfect coordination in the performance of their role. Thus do the gears of the machinery of propaganda, persecution, and terror of the ruling class fit together. This is an indication of the division of labor within the ruling class.

To lead the struggle against ruling class terror is to lead the struggle against ruling class democracy and justice. In the United States at the present moment it is the struggle against the trend toward fascism. To lead a consistent struggle against ruling class "democracy" and "justice" is to lead a struggle for workers' rights, for democratic rights, for the enforcement of constitutional guarantees.

To define the tasks of the I.L.D. as a struggle for workers' rights alone, is to ignore the struggle for the rights of the non-proletarian masses. This would not only narrow down the I.L.D. program, but would destroy its united front character. This position, it is clear, must therefore be rejected. The acceptance of such a position would have a retarding influence upon the movement of the proletariat as a whole, for in the struggle for democratic rights and the enforcement of constitutional guarantees, millions of the non-proletarian elements will be won for conscious struggle, together with the working class, for Soviet power; and millions more who are now under bourgeois influence will be neutralized.

THE I.L.D. AND THE OTHER WORKING CLASS ORGANIZATIONS

It is correct to say that the struggles of the I.L.D. arise out of the activities of the working class organizations. One need only examine the demands of the striking miners, the steel workers, the marine workers, the Negro masses, to appreciate this. To realize these demands, the struggle of these masses end in clashes with the State apparatus. The task of the I.L.D. is to destroy the illusions of a democracy and justice above classes, and to expose their class character. To do this is to awaken and further stimulate class consciousness in the oppressed and exploited masses. To stimulate class consciousness is to prepare the bridge work to the political Party of the working class. Therefore, the Party must guide the I.L.D., both locally and nationally. "The levers and belts are the mass organizations of the proletariat, *without whose aid the dictatorship*

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cannot be realized in practice." [Joseph Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I. Emphasis mine.—W.L.P.]

To accomplish this destruction of the illusions of democracy and justice it must be clear that there must be coordination between the programs of the other class struggle organizations of the working class and the program of the I.L.D. The Party must, it is obvious, be the coordinating center:

> "Its function is to *unify* the work of all the mass organizations, without exception, and to guide their activities toward a single end, that of the liberation of the proletariat. *Unification and guidance are absolutely essential. There must be unity in the proletarian struggle.*" [*Ibid.* Emphasis mine.—W.L.P.]

Yet there are those who declare that we overstress the question of coordination. Undoubtedly there is the danger of mechanical approach, of "Left-sectarianism". The question of coordination, of course, must not be abstractly raised. But a major weakness of the I.L.D. is that it has not sufficiently sought to coordinate its struggles with those of other mass organizations. This is a weakness of the American movement as a whole.

Let us come to the relation of the question of coordination with the question of finding allies. In the United States the Negro masses constitute one of the historic allies of the working class. The white superiority ideology of the ruling class has created a division between these historic allies which the revolutionary movement is only now in the process of destroying. Here we see concretely the effect of Party guidance and leadership. It is no accident that not until after 1928 did the mass organizations seriously turn to winning this ally. In 1928, the Comintern began its momentous clarification of the Negro question with an historical analysis which disclosed the Negro question as the question of an oppressed nation. The reaction of the Party to the C.I. Resolution on the Negro question was an extremely healthy one. A sweeping attack was made upon white chauvinist tendencies in the Party.

The Yokinen trial became the spearhead in this attack. Comrade Yokinen, a member of a very large language organization, was opposed to the presence of Negroes in the home of that organization. He was expelled from the Party after a trial, which had a very deep influence throughout the Party ranks. It is interesting to note that after Comrade Yokinen saw his mistake, and repudiated his position, the United States Government immediately ordered his deportation. No more crass example of the leadership of the Government, in attacks upon the rights of the Negro people, could be found.

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The mass organizations reacted more slowly to the struggle of winning the Negro masses, of transferring them from a reserve of forces for the American bourgeoisie, to a reserve of forces for the proletariat. In 1931, the I.L.D., under the guidance of the Party, began in real earnest the struggle for the defense of the rights of the Negro people, with the Scottsboro case, and raised this struggle, under the leadership of the Comintern and the International Red Aid (I.R.A.), to the level of an international issue.

COORDINATION WAS LACKING

But the issue, with few exceptions, was not linked up, coordinated with the struggles of the other class struggle organizations. Particularly noticeable was the reflection of this weakness on the trade union field. Yet the great potentialities of the Scottsboro case were brought out in trade union work, with the greatest concreteness and clarity. For example, Negro miners, in large numbers, in 1931, joined the National Miners' Union, because "it actively supports the I.L.D. campaign for the defense of the Scottsboro boys" and the United Mine Workers of America does not. Beyond a doubt, had this campaign been systematically and persistently pushed throughout the revolutionary trade unions, the composition of their membership would today be different, an infinitely greater number of Negroes would be organized, and the political enlightenment of the white masses in the spirit of internationalism would be further advanced.

Innumerable cases of our failure to coordinate the struggles of the I.L.D. with the struggles of the other mass organizations and vice-versa, might be cited. The failure of the I.L.D. to link itself up with the Detroit auto strike must be sharply called to the attention of the Party and the mass organizations, and the lessons from this must be clearly drawn.

It is because of such weaknesses that the I.L.D. has failed to recruit great numbers of masses into its ranks; to increase the circulation of its official magazine, *The Labor Defender,* in keeping with the favorable objective conditions; to turn the discontent of the masses of the organizations whose members it defends as victims of capitalist class justice and democracy, into active fighters in the struggle against the "democracy" of the exploiting class. Literally millions of the exploited and oppressed toiling masses are looking for the I.L.D. They do not find it. This can only be explained by the fact that the I.L.D. has carried on mass work inadequately, and that the Party has not given it adequate leadership in its mass work. An immediate turn must be made.

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To make this turn, more attention must be given to the I.L.D. by the Central Committee of the Party. The statement of Comrade Stassova, leader of the International Red Aid, parent body of the I.L.D., to the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., applies in the main to our Party. Comrade Stassova declared:

> "Only because the parties underestimate the political role of the Red Aid and because of the fact that we do not get any good forces for our work, is it possible to have so little attention paid to such a great cause as the struggle against fascism."

The leadership of the I.L.D. has not yet learned how to maneuver on the basis of the antagonisms and conflicts within the ruling class and among the non-proletarian classes, and to turn these to account in order to weaken the enemy and broaden its own *social* base. The struggle against the injunction as a restriction upon the rights of workers and as a violation of constitutional guarantees, must be carefully prepared and decisively carried out. Wide strata of the petty bourgeoisie can be won for this struggle. Its appeal to the working class is clear and need not be discussed here. The same is true of the campaign for the recognition of the status of political prisoners and for relief for political prisoners; also of the campaign for the protection of the foreign-born. The approach of the I.L.D. to the national question must be broadened out to include Cuba, the Philippines, and the other colonial and semi-colonial possessions of American imperialism. Through this method of broadening out its activities, the appeal of the I.L.D. will become greater, the influence more far-reaching, the organization numerically stronger and a check will be given the tremendous fluctuation.

These issues must not only be linked together; their place in the program of a defense organization fighting for workers' rights, democratic rights, etc., must be carefully shown to the masses. The methods of approach to these issues must not be those of a political party. The approach must be that of a defense organization of the working class. The relation of the imperialist policy of colonial oppression to that of the denial to the masses at home of their rights must be made very clear.

This extension of the program of the I.L.D. must include the popularization of Socialist construction in the Soviet Union. This should not be done in a general manner. The popularization should be of the work which more nearly approximates that of the I.L.D. There is, of course, very little that is identical except patronage over political refugees, the sheltering of released or escaped victims of capitalist terror, the establishment of homes for the children of the victims of capitalist terror, etc. The American section of I.R.A.

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does little of this character of work now. It must enlarge its activities in these directions. The Party must see to this.)

But the I.L.D. must bring out distinctly the essential differences between a political prisoner in the Soviet Union and those in America. The class nature of legal processes in the Soviet Union is openly proclaimed. Here the ruling class seeks to hide them simply because it is an exploiting class. The political prisoners there are those who seek to disrupt the building of Socialism, a classless society where man cannot exploit or degrade his fellow man. The prisoners are therefore those who have an anti-social, anti-working class attitude. The prisons there are schools where such an attitude is corrected through work and study. The pay of the prisoner is the union rate for that character of work done. The building of the White Sea Canal with such labor and the complete regeneration of thousands should be popularized here. This is a task of the I.L.D.

There is a line to be followed in the struggle for the status of political prisoners here which has hardly been scratched. Such a campaign would, in addition, be the means of winning over to the struggle considerable numbers of liberals and intellectuals.

ON WINNING OVER PETTY BOURGEOIS STRATA

The task of working among the intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie is a subsidiary one. There can be no question about our main orientation. Nevertheless, work among the intellectuals is assuming increasing importance for the I.L.D. The extent to which these elements can be drawn into such struggles as those for the release of Ernst Thaelmann, the Scottsboro boys, Angelo Herndon, and for relief for political prisoners in the capitalist world is constantly growing greater with the development of fascism and the retreat of the bourgeoisie from parliamentarianism.

For the development of I.L.D. work in this direction we must utilize such statements as were made by Mr. W. O. Thompson of the National Recovery Review Board of which Clarence Darrow is the head. Mr. Thompson said in part:

> "The N.R.A. reflects the inability of so-called 'enlightened capitalism' to operate a 'planned economy' to improve the standards of the masses. Its development day by day reveals more clearly a marked trend toward fascism in the United States."

Here we are presented with tremendous possibilities for utilizing the basis of differences within the ranks of the exploiters and the non-proletarian classes. The I.L.D. makes too little of such possibilities. Its narrow, sectarian outlook chokes its growth organizationally and politically.

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It must be made clear that such possibilities can be realized only under the leadership of the Party. The ruling class and its social-fascist agents within the ranks of the working class also fully appreciate this fact.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SOCIAL-FASCISM ON THE I.L.D. FRONT

It is not an accident that the so-called Non-Partisan Defense League now comes into being. The influence of the I.L.D. is widespread. The influence of the Party within the I.L.D. is great. The camp of renegacy and social-democracy—all who defend the courts and speak of Scottsboro and Mooney as an "occasional miscarriage of justice", all the reformist groups, rally around the "Non-Partisan Defense League" to smash the I.L.D., the advocate of mass action and workers' self-defense. This is its avowed task. This is the role of the Non-Partisan Defense League. With the growth and development of any of the mass organizations of the working class, the reformist and Socialist Party leaders will resort to this splitting tactic. Already, on the field of unemployed relief they have done so. A relentless struggle against these enemies of the working class must be developed in every working class organization. The I.L.D. must see itself as an indispensable weapon of the working class in the struggle with the social-fascist agents of the ruling class and the Negro national reformists.

The struggle of class against class is a struggle to control the mass organizations. The winning of masses includes the winning of the mass organizations. The consolidation of Party fractions within the I.L.D. is a necessary organizational step toward this end.

The general crisis continues to deepen. All of the alphabetic juggling of the Roosevelt Administration has resulted in the New Deal carrying the working class to a lower standard than that in which the "old deal" had left it.

Feverish preparations for war have increased production in some war industries. This for the greater part has been brought about by the speed-up. We are on the eve of a wave of tremendous struggles in the heavy industries. The workers in the automobile, aeroplane, steel, coal, and marine industries are in the first throes of struggles which must inevitably grow sharper, or are preparing for impending struggles.

The I.L.D. must carefully analyze the demands of these workers. It must expose the program of violence by which the ruling class will endeavor to smash the struggles; it must participate in preparing these struggles. If it approaches them from the standpoint of a defense organization of the working class, clearly and skillfully

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offering proof that the demands of the discontented workers are demands for the recognition of workers' rights, democratic rights, constitutional rights, it will gain mass support for these struggles.

Its sphere of action is clear. By a strict adherence to it, the I.L.D. can become a mass organization of hundreds of thousands.

The I.L.D. must be prepared to meet the terror launched by the ruling class as part of the fascization program of the New Deal. In the courts, mass action must take on new and more effective forms. I.L.D. lawyers must and can perform great services in destroying the illusions of "impartial" democracy. Their defendants are the aggrieved parties. Their defendants have the right to stand as the accusers. The court is prepared to resort to any device, not only to smash the struggles out of which the court actions grow, but to maintain the air of "democracy" and "justice above classes".

Here the Party has a tremendous role to play. Party members must defend themselves, bringing out forcefully and fearlessly the struggle of two worlds and the class character of the demagogy of the courts.

In the development of these struggles, the questions of forces and finances will both be answered if the I.L.D. breaks from its narrow sectarianism and bureaucracy. The contribution of the I.L.D. to the revolutionary struggle can be of inestimable value. Its activities can be very far-reaching. It can influence thousands beyond the reach of almost every other front-line struggle organization of the working class. But the effective work of the I.L.D. depends on its role and tasks being well understood by every Party member. The Party is the leader of the mass organizations. It must strengthen its leadership in the I.L.D.

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Figures on the American Economic Crisis

As of May, 1934

By JOHN IRVING *and* PHIL MAYER

(Labor Research Association)

PHYSICAL production in May showed a slight increase over April instead of the expected decline. This was due entirely to the sensational rise of over 11 per cent in the production of steel ingots and of nearly 15 per cent in that of pig iron. Increased production in anticipation of a general strike in the industry is the explanation. Both these increases were, however, almost entirely offset by the drastic decline of nearly 10 per cent in the output of automobiles (see Table 1). At the moment (June 23) all of these three industries are continuing their May tendencies, and the composite result for the month will depend entirely on how the steel industry interprets William Green's "conciliatory attitude" (read "sell-out"), as the *New York Post* puts it (editorial, May 18), toward the steel barons. "It is an open secret," states the *Annalist*, June 22, "that the mills have been stocking heavily in preparation for a strike and our correspondent has estimated that steel ingot production in July will average between 30 and 40 per cent of capacity, as against slightly under 60 per cent at present" [See also *Steel & Metal Notes*, June].

TABLE 1—PRODUCTION [1]

	1934		May				
The Field	May	April	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929
General Index	80[2]	80	73	61	85	99	116
Steel ingot prod.	79	71	48	28	65	100	135
Pig iron prod.	63	55	28	25	63	104	127
Cotton consumption	92	91	112	62	84	83	121
Automobile prod.	71[2]	80	48	43	75	96	138
Lumber prod.	52	53	47	44	77	120	140
Cement prod.	53	54	40	46	96	116	111

1. The *Annalist* Index of Business Activity. "Normal," that is, the computed long-time trend, with the seasonal variations eliminated, equals 100 per cent. The indexes given here should be thought of as percentages of this "normal".
2. Subject to revision.

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Little stimulation of production in the heavy industries is in the offing from other sources, excepting in the prospective construction contracts of the Public Works Administration. But residence construction is running at a lower rate than a year ago. Demand for steel from the automobile industry is definitely declining; the drought has suddenly cut short any possible increase in demand from the agricultural implements industry, and the final admission of bankruptcy of Nazi Germany is bound to set back any prospect of expansion of foreign trade by imperialist countries, including the United States. War, of course, for which the imperialists are preparing, would greatly stimulate trade in certain parts of the world. It remains to be seen what, beyond the meagre public works program, the Roosevelt Administration can produce to hold up an impending decline in industrial production that threatens to reach lower depths than were reached last November.

But while the business index has not yet definitely turned downward, the index of payrolls has already done so and that of employment has barely held its own. According to the figures of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U. S. Department of Labor, the

TABLE 2—EMPLOYMENT [1]

	1934		MAY				
THE FIELD	May	April	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929
A. *Mfg. Indust.* (1923-25=100)							
Gen. Index	82	82	63	63	80	95	105
Slaught. and meat pkg.	97	92	80	80	84	91	94
Cotton goods	101	103	78	62	78	84	98
Knit goods	114	115	98	90	96	106	112
Silk and rayon goods	73	78	69	56	90	98	105
Woolen and worsted goods	75	75	69	46	69	67	84
Men's clothing	82	88	74	68	83	89	99
Women's clothing	127	132	123	119	147	148	152
Iron and steel	77	73	50	53	74	98	105
Elec. mach., appar. & supp.	65	64	46	61	85	112	127
Foundry & mach.-shop prod.	74	72	45	52	76	101	114
Automobiles	114	115	54	67	81	92	127
Steam railroad rep. shops	59	57	49	54	65	75	82
Boots and shoes	91	92	82	78	86	91	93
B. *Non-Mfg. Indust.* (1929=100)							
Anthracite mining	64	58	43	67	80	94	104
Bituminous mining	77	72	61	63	82	90	97
Telephone and telegraph	70	70	70	81	87	100	100
Power and light	83	82	77	84	98	103	98
Retail trade	89	88	77	81	90	97	97
Steam railroads (1926=100)	—	57	53	60	74	89	95

1. Compiled by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, except steam railroads (non-mfg.), which is compiled by the Interstate Commerce Commission.

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May general index of employment in manufacturing industries stood at 82.4 as compared with 82.3 in April, while the index for payrolls declined from 67.3 to 67.1. The figures, it should be remembered, are measured from the base of 100 averaged for the years 1923-1925—ten years ago! That is, for every 100 workers employed *in these industries* 10 years ago, only 82 are employed today; and for $100 paid out in payrolls then, only $67 is paid out now. During the same 10-year period, some 7,500,000 employables were added to the labor market, through the natural increase of population, and of these perhaps one-third, or 2,500,000, would *normally* have been added to these industries. These are now unemployed in *addition* to the 18 jobless out of every 100 there were on the payrolls 10 years ago.

We are prompted to repeat these commonplaces, because of the misleading interpretation given the announcement of the official figures by the bourgeois press, particularly the *New York Times*. "It is estimated," says the *New York Times* of June 21, "that employment increased by 6,500 in the manufacturing industries" between April and May. But actually, between April and May

TABLE 3—PAYROLLS [1]

	—1934—		MAY				
THE FIELD	May	April	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929
A. *Mfg. Indust.* (1923-25=100)							
Gen. Index	67	67	43	47	73	95	113
Slaught. and meat pkg.	81	76	62	68	85	96	98
Cotton goods	80	86	49	38	69	74	93
Knit goods	106	109	72	67	98	108	130
Silk and rayon goods	56	63	43	35	77	89	111
Woolen and worsted goods	54	55	45	29	61	64	83
Men's clothing	53	61	35	34	57	68	90
Women's clothing	89	99	66	74	113	126	141
Iron and steel	66	59	28	27	65	102	116
Elec. mach., appar. & supp.	50	48	29	39	77	120	136
Foundry & mach.-shop prod.	57	54	26	33	64	101	125
Automobiles	100	107	43	57	70	85	136
Steam railroad rep. shops	54	53	38	46	65	80	93
boots and shoes	78	82	57	51	74	78	90
B. *Non-Mfg. Indust.* (1929=100)							
Anthracite mining	64	52	30	58	76	99	99
Bituminous mining	54	51	27	31	54	78	92
Telephone and telegraph	71	69	69	83	94	103	99
Power and light	78	77	70	84	99	105	98
Retail trade	72	72	60	71	88	97	97
Steam railroads (1926=100) [2]	—	—	114	131	187	230	251

1. See footnote, Table 2, Employment.
2. In millions of dollars.

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this year, there was an increase in the number of *unemployed* of twice that number, for the monthly increase in employables amounts to some 60,000. Of these we estimate that some 20,000 would *normally* find their way into the manufacturing industries.

Due to the 10 per cent increase in wage rates in the iron and steel industry in April (strike rumors were becoming persistent) and of 5 per cent in the automobile industry, average per capita weekly earnings in manufacturing industries rose from $19.48 to $19.96 between March and April (Table 4). The increasing number and intensity of the labor struggles are portrayed in Table 5. The continued increase in the cost of living of the urban worker and the growing disparity between prices received and prices paid by farmers are shown in Table 6. [See also article on farmers' outlook in Labor Research Association's *Economic Notes* for July.]

Consumption, as measured by retail sales and imports, continues to decline (Table 7). The figures are not yet available for the month of May, except for department stores. But for April, retail sales declined for all types of outlets, except for mail order houses and stores in certain rural regions where government subsidies have been poured in to quiet the rising farmer revolt. Imports between March

TABLE 4—PER CAPITA WEEKLY EARNINGS[1]

The Field	1934		APRIL		
A. *Mfg. Industries*	April	March	1933	1932	1931
Average (89 Industries)	$19.96	$19.48	$17.40	$18.69	$23.88
Slaught. and meat packing	20.83	20.72	20.00	22.61	25.79
Cotton goods	13.41	13.28	10.40	10.18	14.36
Knit goods	16.02	16.14	12.65	12.44	16.98
Silk and rayon goods	15.12	15.06	11.20	13.11	18.12
Woolen and worsted goods	17.06	17.05	15.14	14.98	20.59
Men's clothing	16.38	17.61	11.65	12.16	16.69
Women's clothing	18.99	21.35	14.86	16.87	23.77
Iron and steel	22.19	20.26	16.02	14.93	25.03
Elec. mach., appar. & supp.	20.86	19.76	20.48	20.66	27.53
Foundry & mach.-shop prod.	21.08	20.23	16.26	17.61	24.27
Automobiles	26.33	25.70	23.45	24.99	30.37
Steam railroad repair shops	25.61	24.28	22.81	24.07	28.20
Boots and shoes	18.27	18.83	13.73	13.63	18.63
B. *Non-Mfg. Industries*					
Anthracite mining	25.85	35.57	20.20	25.19	27.50
Bituminous mining	18.24	19.44	11.41	12.95	17.03
Telephone and telegraph	26.15	27.28	26.43	27.62	29.09
Power, light and mfd. gas	29.66	28.89	28.65	31.50	31.50
Retail trade	19.80	19.42	18.96	21.18	23.64
Steam railroads[2]	—	128	116	122	141

1. Compiled by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, except steam railroads (non-mfg.), which is computed from figures of the Interstate Commerce Commission.
2. Per capita *monthly* earnings.

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and April, *adjusted* for the usual seasonal changes, declined some 5 per cent. And all these figures, it must not be forgotten, are in terms of dollars. In terms of physical volume, because of the concurrent rise in prices, these declines are, of course, much more drastic. Further rise in prices are expected in the fall as another inflation stimulus is provided by the Roosevelt regime.

Dollar value of department store sales between April and May declined some 3 per cent. Prices of department store commodities

TABLE 5—NUMBER AND EXTENT OF STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS [1]

THE FIELD	Number of Disputes	Number of Workers Involved	Number of Man-Days Lost
1934			
March[2]	129	77,411	1,133,734
February[2]	80	71,840	819,934
January	70	38,311	1,926,035
1933			
December	56	20,832	338,746
November	56	37,137	1,160,565
October	107	51,668	3,067,967
March			
1933	91	39,913	445,771
1932	64	33,087	736,782
1931	49	26,453	476,904
1930	49	15,017	289,470
1929	77	14,031	1,074,468

1. *Partial figures* compiled by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of the beginning of the month.
2. Preliminary figures, subject to change.

TABLE 6—COMMODITY PRICES AND COST OF LIVING

	1934		MAY				
THE FIELD	May	April	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929
A. *Wholesale Prices*							
Combined Index (784)[1]	74	73	63	64	73	89	95
B. *Retail Prices*							
Food [1]	67	66	58	63	75	93	95
Dept. store index[2]	—	89	69	77	93	—	—
C. *Cost of Living*[3]	76	75	69	75	84	94	95
D. *Agricultural*[4]							
Farm prices	74	74	62	56	86	124	136
Prices paid by farmers	121	120	102	112	131	150	155

1. Wholesale prices (1926=100) and retail food prices (converted from 1913=100 to 1926=100) compiled by U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
2. Fairchild's combined index of department store articles (Dec. 1930=100).
3. National Industrial Conference Board's cost of living index (converted from 1923=100 to 1926=100).
4. U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics' indexes (Aug. 1909-July 1914=100).

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have increased nearly 30 per cent in the course of the past year. Department store stocks are on the increase.

Domestic stocks on hand (Table 8) were some 3 per cent lower in April than in March. This was due largely to the decrease in the stocks of manufactured chemicals and in the raw materials. *Stocks of iron and steel manufacturers increased over 5 per cent*—already in April stocking up was taking place in anticipation of the strike.

TABLE 7—CONSUMPTION [1]

THE FIELD	April 1934	Mar. 1934	1933 APRIL	1932 APRIL	1931 APRIL	1930 APRIL	1929 APRIL
Dept. store sales[2]	77	77	67	80	106	107	110
Dept. store stocks[2]	65	64	53	70	83	97	99
Chain store sales[3]	86	88	78	88	—	—	—
Variety store sales[4]	87	95	78	84	98	99	102
Mail order and store sales (in million dollars)	46	44	35	40	52	57	56
Exports[2]	50	50	29	38	60	92	118
Imports[2]	42	44	25	36	53	88	118

1. Compiled by U. S. Department of Commerce. All indexes based on dollar sales.
2. 1923-25=100.
3. Average same month 1929-31=100.
4. 1929-31=100.

TABLE 8—COMMODITY STOCKS ON HAND [1]

(1923-25=100)

	April 1934	Mar. 1934	1933 APRIL	1932 APRIL	1931 APRIL	1930 APRIL	1929 APRIL
A. *Domestic (All)*	143	148	133	150	144	135	130
Manufactred gds. (All)	109	108	95	108	119	125	122
Chemical products	123	126	119	134	128	134	129
Food products	82	83	69	85	96	100	109
Iron and steel	104	99	82	87	143	152	147
Textiles	167	167	81	87	93	139	120
Raw Materials (All)	167	176	161	180	162	142	136
Foodstuffs	182	188	160	189	194	174	187
Metals	98	108	78	129	127	92	68
Textile materials	213	231	225	235	177	138	108
B. *World*							
Cotton	211	209	236	218	213	161	148

1. Compiled by U. S. Department of Commerce.

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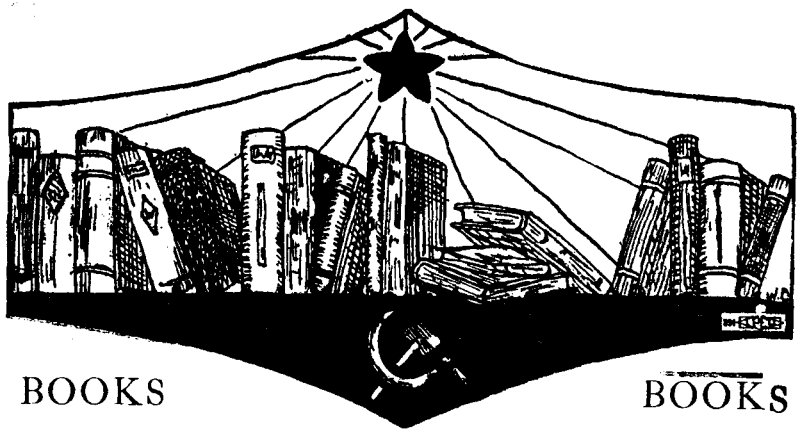

FASCISM, THE DANGER OF WAR AND THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES, *by O. W. Kuusinen.* Report to the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. *Workers' Library Publishers,* 96 pages, 15 cents.

Reviewed by H. M. WICKS

IN HIS report to the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., Comrade Kuusinen made another of his masterly contributions to the international revolutionary movement. Bringing together all the principal characteristics of the capitalist world today Comrade Kuusinen shows that there is a sharpening of "all the cardinal contradictions of the capitalist world to such an extent that a turn may take place at any moment which will signify the transformation of the economic crisis into a revolutionary crisis".

He proves that, in spite of a certain rise in production, not a single capitalist country has been able to extricate itself from the economic crisis, that although certain results have been realized for the capitalists through *the most monstrous starvation measures these cannot restore the stabilization* of capitalism; and that all measures taken shatter still further the mechanism of capitalist economy.

In dealing with the close approach to a new round of revolutions and wars Comrade Kuusinen warns against the social-democratic vulgarizers of Marxism who talk of the "automatic collapse" of capitalism. On the eve of every modern revolutionary upheaval this miserable "automatic collapse" theory, based upon a distortion of Marx's scientific proof of the inevitable downfall of capitalism, is revived by the social-democrats in an attempt to paralyze revolutionary action by the proletariat. No matter how difficult the situation may become for the capitalists, they can always weather the storm, until they are faced with the revolutionary proletariat fighting under the banner of its vanguard, the Communist Party. It is the decisive action of the revolutionary Party, supported by the majority of the working class, that can turn "the impending revolutionary crisis of the capitalist world into the victory of the proletarian revolution."

* * *

In analyzing how monopoly capital, through a long series of assaults upon the living standards of the masses, transfers an enormous share of the costs of the crisis from its own shoulders, Comrade Kuusinen states:

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> "When monopoly capital appropriates a larger share of the value of labor power by cutting down wages, social insurance, etc., it thereby distorts the law of value—the fundamental law of the capitalist mode of production."

Here there is revealed, on the basis of a scientific analysis of the course of the crisis, the devastating effects upon the working class of decaying capitalism—the predatory destruction of human productive forces, the destruction of the vital strength of the wage slaves of capitalism. Thus, hand in hand with a destruction of machinery, with the scrapping of the tractor and the reverting to animal power, with the cutting down of acreage and the vast destruction of food products, there proceeds the destruction of enormous numbers of workers. Hence the fight against capitalism is a fight for life itself, a struggle against extermination. In this connection Comrade Kuusinen shows that the prevailing system of shorter working hours, of part-time in industry, far from being beneficial to workers, is an accompaniment of the terrific speed-up; so much vitality is taken from the worker in a short period of time that it requires all the "free" time of the worker to enable him partially to recoup his strength.

* * *

The sections of the report dealing with fascism and imperialist war lay bare the motives that impel the diplomatic maneuvers of capitalist statesmen, and show that they lead inevitably toward another war for the redivision of the capitalist world. But while all the inherent antagonisms within the capitalist world grow sharper, there is an increase in aggressiveness of the imperialists against the land that is building Socialism—the Soviet Union. Not only does Comrade Kuusinen show the great contrast between the world of decaying capitalism and the world of proletarian dictatorship where the standards of life in all spheres continually advance, but in a brilliant exposition of the peace policy of the Soviet Union, he shows how that policy helps to unmask the war maneuvers of the imperialists and hampers their aggressiveness by compelling them to accept non-aggression pacts.

In its drive toward fascism and imperialist war the bourgeoisie still has as its main social support social-democracy. In dealing with their role Kuusinen blasts with withering scorn the whole array of yellow, perfidious social-fascists. He exposes their filthy deeds in behalf of the bourgeoisie and shows that the political activity of Trotzky, "the counter-revolutionary lackey of the capitalist class", in defense of pseudo- (that is to say capitalist) democracy is in complete harmony with the activities of Bauer, Blum, Vandervelde, Wels, Severing and company. He shows that in all countries the social-democratic leaders are helping the capitalists accelerate their drive toward fascism. Even the introduction of the N.R.A., the pillaging of the United States Treasury to help the capitalist profit-mongers, the growth of parasitism generally, is hailed by international social-democracy as a sort of introduction to socialism. And, says Kuusinen:

> "In the United States, the socialists and the American Federation of Labor are helping Roosevelt carry out what, in fact, are fascist economic measures."

With the sharp weapon of Marxist-Leninist analysis he showed in his speech, delivered in December of last year, precisely the path of infamy and

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treachery that would inevitably be trod by the craven social-fascist leaders of Austria, Bauer and Company, who, a few months later, fled from the country when their followers engaged in armed struggle against Dollfuss, the pigmy butcher, who introduced fascism with the aid of those same heroes of the Second International.

This section should be especially studied by every Party member, by every class conscious worker, because of the light it sheds upon social-fascism. An understanding of this section will equip our comrades with vastly effective weapons against the leaders of the Socialist Party, the Musteites and other "Left" elements in the labor movement, and help to win the workers who follow these agents of imperialism to the revolutionary standard.

* * *

That the headlong approach of a revolutionary crisis will result in another stormy advance of revolution in a number of countries cannot be doubted when one reads that section of the report dealing with the upsurge of revolutionary struggle in the capitalist world. Comrade Kuusinen shows how, in varying degrees, the working class struggles are moving forward in all countries; the intensification of the working class struggle in the imperialist countries; the marked advance of the national liberation struggle in the colonial and dependent countries.

But the decisive factor, the guarantee that in this new revolutionary crisis, the proletariat will be victorious, is the existence of powerful Communist Parties—the Sections of the Communist International. In dealing with the tasks of the Parties, the reporter to the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. takes up in detail the problems of working class women and youth, especially in connection with the fight against fascism and imperialist war. He shows how the revolutionary Party must be able to establish leadership through struggle—to raise the mass struggle from the less developed political forms to mass political strikes, up to the general strike. He puts forth as the principal slogan the revolutionary way out of the crisis, through Soviet Power.

In this connection there is a splendid section dealing with experiences in street fighting in resistance to attacks of the police and the military machine: how workers can organize successful resistance in the streets, in working class neighborhoods, which can become serious obstacles to the armed forces of the enemy and can, under conditions of serious planned resistance, demoralize these forces. In this connection work among the armed forces becomes of tremendous importance. Certainly the importance of such knowledge will be plain to all Communists and class conscious workers who have been roused by the recent butchery carried on in the streets of Toledo.

All in all, the pamphlet is a masterpiece of revolutionary theory and practice; it should be read and re-read in connection with the discussion on the decisions of the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. and the Eighth Convention of our Party.

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THE THIRTEENTH PLENUM OF THE E. C. C. I. declared that "a turn may take place at any moment which will signify the transformation of the economic crisis into a revolutionary crisis." For the American proletariat to be prepared for its historic tasks, every member of the Communist Party and every revolutionary worker must study the materials of

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